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COUNTRY LIFE

MARCH 14, 1957 SPRING GARDENS NUMBER TWO SHILLINGS

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COUNTRY LIFE

Vol. CXXI No. 3139

MARCH 14, 1957

Vandyk

MISS GRACE ANN HELM

Miss Helm, elder daughter of Sir Knox and Lady Helm, of The Old Rectory, Tewin, Hertfordshire, is engaged to be married to Mr. Bryan Kenneth Brock, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Brock, of Winchmore Hill-road, Southgate, N.

COUNTRY LIFE

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POWER AND SOLITUDE

THE revolutionary implications of Lord Mills's statement on the atomic energy programme over the coming decade, and the Government's proposals for accelerating it, are that many agonising re-appraisals of cherished values in scenery and solitudes lie ahead. By 1965 a quarter of Britain's electricity is to be produced, under the plans now being drawn up, by the method which, perfected in the nick of time as coal supplies run out, promises to renew the nation's vital energy. The atomic plants will be mainly in the south of England, to generate power where coal is absent. Because they require great quantities of water, they will presumably be near the coast or in valleys. And until their possibilities of danger are overcome, they will need to be sited in the remoter areas. From them, moreover, will emanate the already familiar lines of pylons.

All this adds up to a grim prospect for the green and pleasant lands of Britain so far unindustrialised. But it would be much grimmer for all of us were not Britain, by one of the most significant feats in our history, pressing forward with developing this almost miraculous means to national survival. It will be essential to maintain a firm grasp of all the factors involved when confronted with the sacrifices we shall be called upon to make of traditional joys and accustomed beauties. For the more elderly they may well be irreplaceable; but for the younger and more adaptable there are other ways of life, other ways of looking at things, which can, and no doubt will, enable these strange new shapes to be assimilated into a satisfying environment. Meanwhile justice demands generosity in compensating those whose roots are severed, and prudence the full exercise of Town and Country Planning measures to marry traditional conceptions with the new pattern of things. In face of such realities an objective attitude on the part of civilians, eschewing emotion and false sentiment, is essential; but they are entitled to expect a corresponding frankness and understanding on the other side.

The Air Ministry's need to establish a rocket station on South Uist, and the nature of the renewed protests against it, present in miniature both aspects of the problem. There is no question of the national necessity, or of the site having to be remote. In fact 300 acres only will be enclosed for launching-points, but from the first it has been made clear that a further 1,200 acres, while free for grazing or cultivation and involving no demolition, will be controlled as a safety area. The Ministry's handling of the matter may have been clumsy, but there has been more sound than sense in much of the opposition. Painful as they are, the facts of this grim age must be faced. A village may vote that the earth is flat, but cannot stop it turning.

THE HUNTERS HUNTED

CONCERN for the welfare of dumb animals is a healthy and humane part of our national character, but it should be kept within bounds. The recent incidents in which the Devon and Somerset Staghounds were involved have shown how easy it is for well meaning but uninstructed people to lose their sense of proportion when faced by an issue which is not as simple as they like to think. Before rushing into print or raising their voice in the House of Commons they should read the report of the Committee on Cruelty to Wild Animals published in 1951. The Committee was appointed by a Labour Home Secretary (Mr. Chuter Ede), and it investigated thoroughly, among other things, every form of field sport. It came to the conclusion that "the hunting of red deer is a useful and necessary form of control which affects both directly and indirectly the agricultural population of Exmoor," that the suffering involved is "no greater than that involved in any other practicable method of control," and that "hunting should, therefore, be allowed to continue as at present." It is true that a further recommendation was that all wild animals should be brought within the provisions of the Protection of Animals Acts (only those in captivity are protected at present), but it emphasised the difficulty of enforcing such a measure and specifically excepted, under certain approved conditions, those engaged in hunting. As for the hunting of carted deer, which many people of moderate views find distasteful, the Committee were "not satisfied . . . that there is a sufficient degree of cruelty in this sport to justify legislation to prohibit it." It is a pity that a spokesman of the British Field Sports Society, faced by a demand from the League Against Cruel Sports that the Devon and Somerset should be disbanded, should have said so little about these findings, and have stressed instead the possible effect on the local hotel industry. That is not the way to look at these matters. But it is a greater pity that so many sensitive people do not take the League's activities in these matters at their true value.

TENDER PLANT

THE heart has gardens, where the seed
Is planted when the year's at spring;
The heart has gardens and the need
For gentle fingers at the growing thing,
For careful nurture and soft rain,
For hours of sunshine, day by day,
For weeded paths, for post and chain
Or hedge, to keep great harm away.

The heart has gardens: let them be
Planted, tended, brought to flower
And rich in fruit, my son, for thee:
Fit harvest for thy manhood's hour.

MARGARET SHEPPARD FIDLER.

ARGUMENT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ALL who are interested in seeing the structure of local government brought into line with post-war requirements will be disturbed by a new outbreak of disagreement on the subject among local government authorities of England and Wales. As long ago as 1945, a beginning was made by the appointment of a Boundary Commission, whose work unfortunately proved abortive. That setback was followed by years of disputation. In 1955 the Minister of Housing and Local Government held a series of meetings with representatives of the five associations which speak for the various types of councils, and agreement was reached on proposals covering the main issues. This measure of progress was heartening to those who felt that ten years of argument were enough, and that concessions should now be made in the interests of early action. On these proposals the Minister set forth the Government's policy in a White Paper which stated that before legislating the Government wished to have further discussions with representatives of local authorities. In the six months since the publication of the White Paper the old battle seems to have been renewed. How far it is a conflict of principle and how much a wordy warfare over terminology, it is difficult to discern. The Minister has said that while the willing co-operation of local authorities can be of great value in carrying through a reorganisation, the Government do not take the view that no changes can be made except by agreement with the local authorities. Unless the mood of the authorities changes in the course of renewed discussions, the Government may be obliged to act without agreement, lest another decade be lost in argument.

A GREAT BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATOR

IT is fitting, in this Gardens Number, to commemorate James Sowerby, who was born on March 24, 1757. He was a man of wide scientific interests, who collected and studied minerals, crystals, fossils and plants; but it is as a botanical illustrator that we chiefly know him to-day. About fifty of the plates in *Flora Londinensis* and seventy in the early numbers of the *Botanical Magazine* are his; in addition he actually engraved many himself. In 1790 he began work on *English Botany*, a systematic flora in which British wild plants are illustrated in more than 2,500 coloured plates. Apart from its intrinsic merits, which remain undiminished to-day, *English Botany* has a particular interest. It appeared at the culmination of a period of ever-increasing interest in botany and flower illustration among the leisured classes, particularly ladies. Unlike many of the sumptuous flower volumes of the times, with private, even royal backing, Sowerby's was a private enterprise: issued in small parts in the convenient octavo size, it was a financial and a social success, which it probably would not have been even twenty-five years earlier. Not least of the reasons for its success is a scientific one, the acceptance of Linnaeus's binomial system, which enabled any amateur to classify his collected plants or paintings of them. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell has called Sowerby "founder of a dynasty of painters." Not only literally, for many of his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons were capable naturalists and painters of flowers, shells and other naturalia—a striking example of genetical inheritance—but in the general sense is this true. It was not his genre to turn striking or colourful flowers into works of art, as did his famous contemporaries Redouté and Thornton, though his *Coloured Figures of British Fungi*, done in inks, is full of imagination; his meticulous delineation of the smallest plant has served as a standard to all later botanical illustrators. The original drawings of his two major works and others, his herbarium and his collection of 5,000 fossils, together with many of his ingeniously made models of fungi, can be seen at the British Museum of Natural History.

A GRAND CRICKETER'S FAREWELL

IT is always sad when to a great player of games there comes the time to retire. Denis Compton, it is stated, proposes to play one more season of first-class cricket, but will not be available after that. Ever since he had the operation to his knee some such announcement became probable, and after the Test Matches in South Africa, now over, it seemed almost inevitable. It has become clear that he has not the mobility left with which to attack the bowlers as he used to do, and at the same time he must for the same reason have lost his side a certain number of runs in the field. He has been so great a player that it would be rash to prophesy what a recovery he might yet make and what deeds he might do, but it is impossible not to feel that his time has almost come. "Vell, Governor," as Sam Weller said to his father, "we've all got to come to it one day or another," and it would be distressing to see so illustrious a cricketer fading gradually away. Indeed many people may wish that he had taken the decisive step after his fine play against the Australians last summer. That would have been "a sundown splendid and serene" such as everyone must wish for him.

COVER PICTURE

Our cover picture, taken by a COUNTRY LIFE photographer, is of the gardens at Glan-y-Mawddach, near Barmouth, Merioneth.

A Countryman's Notes

By IAN NIALL

ONE often hears of wild-goose-chasing, and the traditional call of the first cuckoo is almost a legend with editors and writers to ne newspapers, but is there any delight quite so reat among the devotees of natural history as nat to be found in talking about the corn-rake? I must be honest and say that it is a ubject that makes me prick up my ears, and noticed the other day that my paper had eturned to the corn-crake. The corn-crake elongs to the day when corn exchanges really ere corn exchanges, mechanics and their asters fussed round steam ploughs without roubling to remove their tall hats and stiff hite collars, and the bicycle was an outlandish ing with solid tyres. How, asked the writer my newspaper, and I join him now, did those ho noted the decline in the corn-crake's num-ers account for the fact that it invariably id its eggs (and raised its brood) before ay harvest was possible in most places? If survived in such places, surely it should ill survive where harvest is late and only half echanical?

* * *

MMEDIATELY one steps out of a generation. The mowing machine is supposed to have ritten the doom of the corn-crake, and the owing machine is not an invention of this entury. Who counted corn-crakes in Victorian ays? A thousand hands will reach for pens to rite of the call of the corn-crake being heard every corner of this green and pleasant land. he air is sweet and peaceful. The wicked owing machine is still being tinkered with as new-fangled invention, while men wearing oleskins and kneestraps swing rhythmically to an endless acreage of ryegrass. Grand-ther or great-grandfather, frowning upon the ay-choked machine, takes out a turnip watch nd remarks that he is expecting a spare part be brought by the carrier due at a quarter fter three o'clock. Drat these corn-crakes, a an can hardly hear himself speak for them!

The picture fades, television-like, and gives ace to another in which the machine is work-g at full speed, having enabled its owner, as e advertisement promised, to dispense with e labour of six or seven persons. It dates a an to say he can remember corn-crakes, and fancy that all he can then do is to claim that e can hear crickets, which, in theory, puts him ack into early middle age.

The corn-crake is heard in the Western les, remote parts of Westmorland and Cum-rland and, I suppose, in other parts unknown me. The mowing machine may have fright-ned it away from former haunts, for the rails re most timid and shy creatures, but I wonder at it is not reasonably common on the lower ll farms in Wales.

* * *

HAVING fished the dry fly for many years, I have in mind to turn my thoughts and hat skill I have to fishing the wet fly. It is ue that I have fished the wet fly on occasions, sing flies such as the Peter Ross, the Butcher nd Greenwell's Glory, but serious thought akes me conclude that a black fly on the rface of the water may have some sort of unterpart beneath the surface. My diary for vo seasons lists not only the fish I caught, but e contents of the stomachs of those fish, hich I carefully examined on every occasion, pating the mass on a saucer of water and entifying, as best I could, the ingredients hich made up the fishes' diet.

All through the season I found that the sh from the rather high lakes which I visit had een taking a good number of beetles of varying apes and sizes. Some of these beetles were ey and brown, but the bulk of them were ack. In addition, the fish had also taken uantities of black flies, and it seems to me that something like a beetle fished wet, weighted if necessary to get down to the fish, might prove deadly. A black hackle and some black ostrich herl on a hook dressed with wire to give it additional weight was my first choice, but the other day I came across a book by T. C. Ivens, a very successful reservoir fisherman, and was delighted to find his general-purpose fly is like my own, a black one, but a wet one which he calls a Black and Peacock spider.

* * *

THE Black and Peacock spider consists of four strands of peacock herl, wound to form a body, and a black hen hackle. It serves as an imitation of the water boatman, snail and, I fancy, a host of small insects commonly found in lakes and forming part of the trout's daily diet. It is true that the wet-fly fisherman takes more fish in most circumstances than his counterpart fishing the dry fly. Since large fish are often hard to lure with a dry fly, a good wet fly is something sought by every lake angler. Last season I heard the first whisper of a lake where fish of four pounds and upwards can be taken, and I have been looking forward to catching one of these giants ever since. If the big trout cannot be taken with my favourite dry fly, there is a chance that I may get one on a wet fly, and my flybox is being stocked accordingly.

* * *

THE other day we had a hard frost. The ground became as hard as iron overnight and it was obvious that the birds were feeling the cold hand of winter, for there was nothing that they could eat. Normally we save any bread that is not eaten and take it over to the cottage for the hens, since bread and potatoes have a high nutritional value, but on this occasion the sparrows and jackdaws benefited. I suppose one shouldn't feed sparrows that take buds from gooseberries or jackdaws that rob pea patches and chicken runs, but it made no difference. We found half a loaf and laid it out for the birds. It was immediately pounced upon by the jackdaws. One at a time they took their fill, each threatening his own kind.

When the jackdaws returned to the roof tops, the next on the scene were the sparrows, and almost at once three starlings dispossessed them. There is something very aggressive about the movements of a starling. The starlings in turn departed. Two blackbirds fought a running battle round the bread and the sparrows hung on the fringe of this battle, but all the while a single tomtit pecked away at the bread. This sort of thing went on all day. The sparrows provided more fights than any of the other birds, mobbing individual members of their species and fighting it out in a jumble across the grass, so that invariably they lost possession of the bread, which was pecked at by whatever bird was bold enough to run in. How long these fights would have gone on had the bread remained I do not know, but at length it was reduced to a size that a watching crow decided was within his carrying capacity and he swooped down and took it. The jackdaws gave chase, but the crow, helped by his mate, managed to get away with his prize. This may have been a blessing, for I always think that lumps of bread and fat put out for birds attract rats and other unwanted vermin.

* * *

THINGS lucky or unlucky are valued or shunned by most people. My brother, like a lot of other airmen during the war, had his luck piece. My father, too, used to have what he called a lucky penny, which he constantly had to retrieve from his change when paying for small purchases. My own luck pieces have been two in number. One was a fishing hat about which I held the belief that I could not catch fish unless I had it on my head. Whether this was true or not I don't think I found out in the years that I wore the hat. I caught fish and I lost fish, and I hung my unwanted and useless flies on the hat, but at length I put it firmly aside, for it leaked badly and twice I caught severe colds as a result.

The other luck piece is what might be called a workhouse penny. How I came by it I do not know. I have had it for a number of years. On one side of the penny there are a picture of a workhouse, the date 1812 and the words "Birmingham" and "One Penny." On the other side the inscription reads "One Pound Note for 240 Tokens," and, in smaller letters, "payable at the workhouse." The coin is slightly larger than a penny and about the same thickness. I cannot say whether I have had luck with it in my possession, but it remained for a long time in the pocket of an old jacket. The other day I took it out and examined it and somehow it got in with the change in my pocket. I was on the bus a little later, and when I rather absently gave the conductor my fare he clicked his tongue and said: "Ooh ah, one pound note, eh? You better pop along to the work'ouse an' get it changed!"

These tokens were presumably some form of payment for services to the citizens of Birmingham and cashable, perhaps in kind, by the workhouse master. I hardly think a tramp would give thanks for a penny or a penny token these days, for I overheard one of the regular cadgers who tramp through the village from time to time asking a man in the road the other day for sixpence for a cup of tea.

Tom Weir

MARE AND FOAL ON THE SUTHERLAND MOORS

MODERN TRENDS IN GARDEN-MAKING

By A. G. L. HELLYER

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FELLS ACROSS THE GARDENS OF MUNCASTER CASTLE, CUMBERLAND. Though this garden is to some extent overplanted, it remains one of the most exciting in England

NOT many fine gardens have been made since the war, though there have been numerous extensions or alterations to older gardens—at Dartington Hall in Devon, for example, at Cliveden in Buckinghamshire and at Hascombe Court in Surrey. By contrast, the twenty years between the two World Wars were notably rich in garden-making. In style and character these have varied greatly, but one feature common to almost all has been an exceptional richness in plants. Indeed, if the 20th-century gardeners ever acquire a comprehensive label to compare with that of the formal gardeners of the 17th century, the landscape architects of the 18th and the "bedders-out" of the 19th, it will probably be that of plantsmen.

It is this overriding passion for plants for their own sake that has given modern gardens most of their charm and has been the cause of almost all their weakness. Design has been lost in detail; gardens have burst their bounds and overflowed into the surrounding fields and woods until, in many cases, they became unwieldy and have proved impossible to maintain in the more stringent economic conditions of the post-war years.

VARIED PLANTING IN THE GARDEN AT CLYNE CASTLE, SWANSEA. The planting here is on the whole too lavish, but there are many beautiful effects such as this

Not long ago I came across a nearly forgotten but remarkable example of this kind of gardening in Herefordshire. I had been told of a fabulous collection of rhododendrons at Hergest Croft near Kington and went in search of it. The house had been taken over by a girls' school and the garden around it, a conventional example of the Robinson-Jekyll school, was in tolerable condition. But though there were a few rhododendrons and some excellent azaleas, I could see no sign of the plant wealth of which I had been told. Enquiring further, I learned that the main rhododendron plantation was in a wood half a mile or so distant. There I discovered such a jungle of rhododendrons as I had not dreamed existed anywhere in that part of England. There were hundreds of bushes grown one into another and apparently quite untended for years. Self-sown seedlings grew thickly, and there seemed to be no good reason why this particular piece of 20th-century planting should not be self-perpetuating for generations to come. But lovely and exciting though it was, it could hardly be called gardening.

Something very similar was happening to the astonishing garden made by the late Admiral Walker-Heneage-Vivian at Clyne Castle, Swansea, until it was taken over by the Swansea parks department. In the mild climate of South Wales rhododendrons and many other shrubs thrive amazingly, and at Clyne Castle they were planted with such enthusiasm for so many years that they extended far into the surrounding woodlands. A friend once referred to this particular piece of planting as

being not so much a garden as a plantsman's hike, a derisive comment with an element of truth, though it overlooked the many very beautiful effects that had been created, sometimes, perhaps, quite accidentally, by Admiral Walker-Heneage-Vivian's too lavish planting.

Overplanting has tended to spoil some gardens in another way—by causing overcrowding and so marring the individual beauty of many of the plants. To some extent this has happened with the garden at Muncaster Castle in Cumberland, which, nevertheless, partly because of its superb setting at the mouth of Eskdale and partly because of the masterly manner in which the original planting was conceived, remains one of the most exciting gardens in England. It is also fair to observe that the basic design dates from the great landscape period of the 18th century, and it has provided an enduring frame for more recent planting.

Three gardens which in their very different ways seem to me to be typical of English gardening in the last quarter of a century are Ashford Chace, near Petersfield, Sissinghurst Castle in Kent and Clare College, Cambridge.

Ashford Chace has the advantage of a fine setting on the side of a small valley issuing from between high, beech-covered hills, which provide a superb backdrop. The planting has two main objects. On the lip of the valley it is designed to create a long vista from the house and the lawns that surround it towards the hills and a huge horse chestnut which dominates the middle distance. This vista has been deliberately tapered to exaggerate the impression of length. In the valley itself, where the view is necessarily more restricted, the aim has been to create a series of pictures based as much on the contrasting textures of plant growth as on flowers. Trees and shrubs have been most skilfully intermingled with bold masses of herbaceous plants to create an organic design which is never lacking in interest.

CLOSE GROUPING OF SHRUBS AT BRATTLES GRANGE, BRENCHLEY, KENT. This is labour-saving, as the dense growth reduces weed competition

Something of the same kind, though perhaps rather more tamed and disciplined than at Ashford Chace, has been achieved at Brattles Grange, Brenchley, Kent, and it is interesting to compare the contrasts between these two highly successful inter-war gardens as well as the similarities. The design of Brattles Grange is more obvious than that of Ashford Chace, which achieves its effect in a deceptively casual manner. Moreover, in the Kentish garden there are examples of that close grouping of shrubs and cover plants which Mr. Michael Haworth-Booth has described as "boskage" planting. This is not only effective in appearance but also labour-saving in practice, as the dense growth reduces weed competition to a minimum.

Sissinghurst Castle has a very different story to tell. This is a romantic garden,

CONTRASTED TEXTURES AT ASHFORD CHACE, NEAR PETERSFIELD. In this garden trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants are skilfully intermingled. (*Right*) HERBACEOUS PLANTS AND ROSES AT SISSINGHURST CASTLE, KENT. The garden is split into a number of small sections like a series of cottage gardens

THE FELLOWS' GARDEN AT CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE. Colour is handled with great care to enhance the impression of depth

perfectly in keeping with its setting. There is not a great deal left of the old castle, but what remains has actually gained in dramatic effect from its isolation. In particular, the slender twin towers spring from the quiet Kentish countryside with the unexpectedness of a film set in a field. There are other remnants of the castle in front, enclosing a fine rectangular courtyard and still more buildings and walls which split the whole garden up into a number of quite small sections, rather like a series of cottage gardens. A rich and varied planting, in which old-fashioned flowers predominate, enhances this impression, but cohesion has been maintained by stringing these units like jewels along several main paths or open vistas, which also ensure an element of spaciousness in what might otherwise so easily have deteriorated into a number of rather niggly details. Sissinghurst Castle is famed for its roses and there is no doubt that they do fit perfectly into the scheme, but so do many other plants, and it would be a pity if admiration for one feature, however good in itself, were allowed to detract attention from the genius of the design as a whole.

Again, an interesting comparison may be made with Hidcote Manor, in Gloucestershire, where the English cottage garden tradition is also said to have provided the inspiration, and where also there has been a most successful attempt to maintain a sense of space and unity with two long but narrow vistas, roughly at right angles to each other. But whereas at Hidcote the intimate gardens lie outside these main lines of design, at Sissinghurst Castle they form part of them.

The Fellows' Garden at Clare College, Cambridge, is interesting because of the care with which colour has been handled. The garden, which is a long, rather narrow rectangle, lies across the river from the college with its long axis at right angles to the building. Once again, as at Ashford Chace, a virtue has been made of necessity and the length of the plot has been turned to good use in making a vista from the college and the small Masters' Garden which separates it from the river. But at Clare the extent of the vista has not been accentuated by tapering it away in the distance, but by graduating the colour of the flowers used to decorate it. All the strongest colours are kept in the foreground, with blues and pinks in the middle distance and a more hazy mixture of colours at the far end. Similar care in detail is to be observed in the colour planning of other features at Clare, such as the herbaceous border, with its lovely glimpses of Trinity Chapel, and the long shrub border, in which white predominates.

The most recent tendency with herbaceous plants and shrubs is not to keep them separate, but to mix them together and even to add roses, dahlias and bedding plants to them for good measure. A fine example of this kind of planting is to be seen in the Long Border at Great Dixter, Sussex, a garden which was made between the wars, but has been added to in detail since and is, as a result, fully abreast of the times. The great merit of this kind of mixed planting is that it enables interest to be maintained for a long period in any part of the garden. Everyone who has tried to make a shrub border knows how readily it becomes deadly dull from midsummer to Michaelmas, or how easy it is for a herbaceous border to have one or two peak seasons and little besides. The mixed border, by contrast, can begin to attract notice with daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops in February and March, give its best shrub display in April and May, to be followed immediately by herbaceous plants and roses until the end of July, when the dahlias take over to link with michaelmas daisies, berries and foliage colours for the autumn. Even in midwinter there may be some flower from witch hazel, laurustinus and wintersweet, as well as the foliage variations of evergreens and the stem colours of willows, dogwoods and maples.

One of the most interesting post-war gardens is Coles in Hampshire. Not that it has anything new to show in gardening, for it is mainly a woodland garden in the style made familiar by Wakehurst Place and Leonardslee, in Sussex, and other famous gardens of earlier years. But Coles is one of the few large gardens of this kind that have been completely made since the war. The house was formerly a farmhouse and no attempt has been made to enlarge or glorify it. It has instead been retained as a comfortable but economical home, a necessary appendage of the garden, rather than the central feature which the garden adorns.

Inevitably most recent gardens have been small, but that does not mean that they lack interest or character. I know of no two gardens that give me greater pleasure in their very different ways than those of East Lambrook Manor and Tintinhull in Somerset. The first is based squarely on the cottage garden tradition, which suits it admirably, for it is in the middle of a Somerset village and, like any good cottage garden, is almost wholly open to the road. But the design has been given a richness and coherence far beyond the powers of the ordinary cottage gardener and the planting material is almost unbelievably varied. It would have been so easy for this garden to have become a higgledy-piggledy collection, and a measure of the genius of its creators is that the design lives in the memory just as vividly as do the plants.

Tintinhull House has a much more obviously mannered garden, which perfectly suits the small mansion which it displays so admirably. The long central path focuses attention on the early-18th-century front and at the same time gives access to a series of quite small gardens in which plants have been associated with loving attention to colour and texture. The creators of these two very different gardens are friends, and they like to refer to themselves as respectively the "plantist" and the "groupist." But what is really so interesting is that, despite the quite exceptional variety of planting at East Lambrook Manor, there is, in fact, so much careful grouping, and that for all the careful colour schemes devised at Tintinhull there is so good a representation of plants.

It is easy to deride the times in which one lives, and much criticism has certainly been directed at 20th-century garden design. But whatever verdicts may be passed by future generations, it seems probable that they will have to admit that there was no previous age in which gardening engrossed the attention of so many people or gave so much pleasure.

THE GARDEN OF EAST LAMBROOK, SOMERSET, BASED ON THE COTTAGE GARDEN TRADITION

GROWING PLANTS IN BOTTLES

By A. J. HUXLEY

IT was in 1829 that a certain Nathaniel Ward, who was keenly interested in natural history, placed the chrysalis of a moth in some soil at the bottom of a closed glass jar, so that he could, in due course, obtain a perfect specimen of the insect. What happened to the moth history does not relate; other events distracted Mr. Ward's attention, as a contemporary writer described: "After a time, a speck or two of vegetation appeared on the surface of the mould, and to his surprise turned out to be a fern and a grass. His interest was awakened; he placed the bottle in a favourable situation, and found that the plants continued to grow, and maintain a healthy appearance."

So was created the Wardian case. Mr. Ward carried out numerous experiments in his London home, and came to the conclusion that many plants could thrive in these cases with neither change of air nor additional water, for the plants absorbed and gave out carbon dioxide and oxygen alternately, and whatever moisture was transpired condensed on the glass and trickled down to the soil again.

Ferns were particularly at home in these cases, which the Victorians often, indeed, called fern cases. The simplest was a glass dome placed upon a pot or bowl containing one or two plants, but many more complex designs were available, usually constructed of cast iron and glass, ornamented in typical Victorian style, though often with a certain unexpected elegance. Sometimes a "fernery" was combined with an aquarium, rocks on which the ferns perched rising from an aquarium tank beneath.

Some over-reached themselves in elaboration: one example illustrated in a Victorian publication shows an adaptation of the ruins of Tintern Abbey—a "ruined" stonework arch in a glassed-in niche designed to be planted with ferns, ivies and the like.

Among the benefits which the Wardian case conferred upon its occupants were freedom from soot, smog and gas fumes—what another contemporary of Ward's described as "fuliginous matter" and "acidulous emanations." The greatest benefit, however, was the humid atmosphere created within such cases, by the mere enclosure of moderately damp earth and transpiring plants, and the corresponding relief from dry air and draughts, those bugbears of indoor plants. Wardian cases were, indeed, widely adopted by plant collectors for bringing plants from far countries on shipboard, and increased the proportion of survivors from one in a thousand to around 85 per cent. or better.

Alas, ornate Wardian cases are rarities today. I have heard of their being picked up in a junk shop, but never had the fortune to find one myself. In America can be bought up-to-date Wardian cases, or terrariums as they are called there, of simple but often pleasantly modern style, the five glass surfaces held in a narrow metal framework.

CAST-IRON WARDIAN CASE IN WHICH TO KEEP PLANTS INDOORS IN HUMID CONDITIONS. Engraving from a late-Victorian book. Such cases are named after Nathaniel Ward, who experimented with plants under glass without change of air or additional water

Nothing quite similar is available in this country, but several kinds of what are really miniature indoor greenhouses have been available. The simplest are basically propagating frames, often heated by the questionably safe means of electric light bulbs, or even oil heaters; the more elaborate, and expensive, have a tubular electric heater controlled by a thermostat.

Such heated structures are not strictly Wardian cases, because the heater causes rapid drying out of the atmosphere and the soil in the pots, so that water has to be added frequently. They are certainly very useful as propagators, but not entirely so for growing plants in, as they are, in my experience, quite difficult to manage successfully. The larger such a case, within reason, the more use it is likely to be for keeping plants, and the less troublesome will be air dryness caused by the heaters.

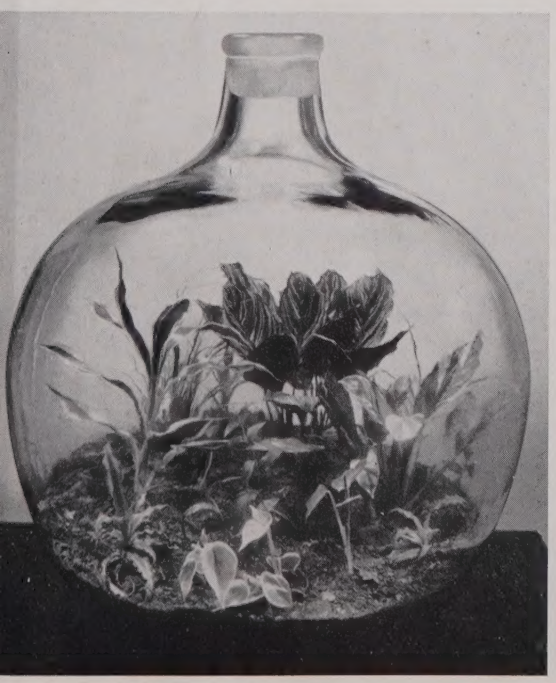
In Scandinavian countries, where indoor plants are often grown on a lavish scale, such large structures, where all the conditions of a greenhouse may be emulated, are sometimes built into rooms. The scale of this is perhaps beyond the desire of most householders here. The fact remains that glass indoors has a definite fascination, as well as being useful for difficult room plants.

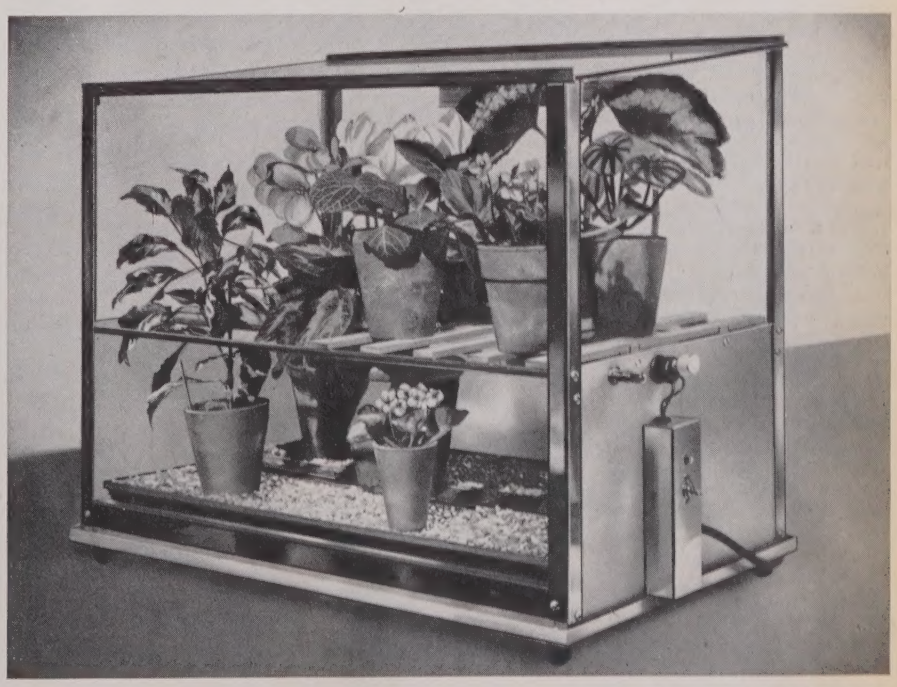
One attractive combination of glass protection and decorativeness is a glass carboy. The illustration shows such a garden in miniature in an open carboy; but I have kept this one stoppered, like a true Wardian case, for several months, in a room otherwise unfavourable to plants, and several feet from the only window. It always creates comment and fascinated enquiries as to how the plants got in—were they grown from seed or is the bottom of the carboy removable? No, I put all in at the top, in a mature state, using a home-made pair of long tongs, a couple of canes, one fitted with a cotton-reel to firm the soil, and a deal of patience.

A full inch depth of broken crocks is covered with a soil mixture containing loam and a lot of rotted leaf mould—peat is a substitute—with some crushed charcoal. These were inserted through a paper funnel; it is most important that the mixture be only just moist.

The plants are all greenhouse subjects, mainly too tender for normal room culture, and chosen for interesting leaf shape and pattern. Foremost among suitable subjects are marantas, calatheas and fittonias; others include small bromeliads such as cryptanthus, peperomias, tradescantias, pellionias, pileas, ferns and small dracaenas. The only attention I have had to give is the occasional removal of decaying leaves, by the careful use of a razor-blade fixed into a cane. Over-exuberance has also occasionally to be restrained.

The bottle garden, rather like the ship in bottle, is a *tour-de-force* which cannot very well be repeated in a room. A simple rectangular Wardian case, however, especially if fitted with artificial light, can offer the frustrated flat-dweller the means of growing many kinds of greenhouse plants indoors.





TENDER PLANTS FLOURISHING IN A GLASS CARBOY. The plants grow as well when the carboy is stoppered. (*Right*) MODERN INDOOR GREENHOUSE WITH THERMOSTATICALLY CONTROLLED ELECTRIC HEATER

ASPECTS OF GEORGE STUBBS

By DENYS SUTTON

1.—*MARES AND FOALS IN A LANDSCAPE*, BY GEORGE STUBBS (1724-1806). Lent by Mr. Anthony de Rothschild and the National Trust. An exhibition of works by Stubbs is on view at the Whitechapel Art Gallery until April 7

NOWADAYS it is increasingly realised that pictures of sporting scenes or of horses are not as restricted in their artistic importance as used to be believed: in fact, certain artists like Ben Marshall and James Ward are closely connected with the history of art, both in this country and on the Continent. These were men who made a decided contribution to the development, for instance, of the Romantic movement.

Among such painters George Stubbs holds a pre-eminent position, and the notable exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, arranged with the assistance of Mr. Basil Taylor, who has been studying this master for nearly a decade, provides the first occasion that the London public has enjoyed for many years to assess his position. It is a broadly based survey in which all the variety of Stubb's art is demonstrated. He is shown to be both a sharp observer of anatomy and an elegant painter of daily life.

It must be at once emphasised that Stubbs was not so much an animal painter, in the sense of Herring or Ben Marshall, as a scientist who happened to fasten on the horse as the theme for his investigations. As early as 1774 when at York he began by making a close study of animal life; his earliest works at present known are the illustrations that he executed for an essay on midwifery by Dr. John Burton (the source of Dr. Slop in *Tristram Shandy*), first published in London in 1751.

Unfortunately, the early phases of Stubbs's career remain obscure; above all, his journey to the Continent, which took place in 1754, when he is alleged to have visited Rome and to have returned home via Ceuta, in Morocco. According to his friend Ozias Humphry, who lost some manuscript memorials of conversations with Stubbs, the motive for his journey to Rome was to "convince himself that nature was and always is superior to Art, whether Greek or Roman, and having received this conviction he immediately resolved upon returning home." What is so curious about this remark is that Stubbs's own painting shortly after this date revealed his awareness of Classical art; and in later years, as we know from Wedgwood's letter to Bentley, he bewailed the fact that he was considered a horse painter, not a portraitist or history painter.

The range of his style makes clear, in any event, that Stubbs at an early date was in possession of a mature and personal approach, and the paintings that he executed for some of his noble patrons in the 1760s suggest the contrasts in mood and interpretation that could occur. Nothing could be more straightforward as a sporting picture than his canvas of Lord Holland and Lord Albemarle shooting at Goodwood, Sussex (Fig. 2), painted about 1760, which is one of three large compositions in the

2.—*LORD HOLLAND AND LORD ALBEMARLE SHOOTING AT GOODWOOD* In the collection of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon

collection of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon. Lord Holland, who is seen wearing a blue coat, was the brother-in-law of the 3rd Duke of Richmond, and Lord Albemarle, who appears in a drab coat, was the Duke's first cousin. As Mr. Taylor tells us in an informative note, two of the servants, of whom one is a Negro, wear the Duke's scarlet and yellow livery.

On the other hand, in the series of pictures of mares and foals undertaken for such patrons as the 2nd Marquis of Rockingham and the 1st Earl Grosvenor about 1762 he broke away from the conventional interpretation of this genre, concentrating on a series of what must be considered as portraits of horses: "the recurrence of the same horses in some of the pictures suggests," so the catalogue maintains, "that others were rather variations upon a theme which must have been particularly attractive in a period when the breeding of horses was so actively pursued." In some cases, however, our understanding of the composition as such—for example in the *Mares and Foals* belonging to Earl Fitzwilliam—is made more difficult owing to the absence of any background. The fact that the picture appeared on exhibition at the Society of Arts in 1762 might suggest that the lack of background is intentional; that the artist or rather the Marquis of Rockingham decided that the horses themselves should capture attention.

4.—PORTRAIT OF JOSIAH WEDGWOOD. Lent by Josiah Wedgwood and Sons

3.—*HUNTER IN A LANDSCAPE.* In the collection of Mrs. Katharine Gilbey

The adoption of a compositional device reminiscent of a Classical frieze in this and in other pictures, like the *Mares and Foals in a Landscape* lent by Mr. A. de Rothschild and the National Trust (Fig. 1), is striking. It was an approach likely to have appealed to his patrons, who were often collectors of the antique. Can it be, one wonders, that Stubbs was inspired by what he had seen in Rome? What is certain is that he must be considered as an exponent of the Neo-classical style in English art, a point that is reinforced, for instance, by the frozen movement of the celebrated picture *Hambletonian, Rubbing Down* (the Dowager Marchioness of Londonderry), painted in 1799 or 1800.

Further evidence of Stubbs's connection with Italy is found in *Hunter in a Landscape* lent by Mrs. Katharine Gilbey (Fig. 3), in which the landscape background, with its distant lighthouse, is stated in the catalogue to be a view from nature in Italy. Whether this view is, in fact, based on an actual scene, or, as seems more likely, on recollection of the generalised atmosphere, or on the backgrounds to be found in Claude or Richard Wilson remains obscure, but the complexity and interest of Stubbs's style become evident. His connection with history painting, for example, needs careful consideration, and I hope to be able to discuss this and other matters in a further article on Stubbs to be published in COUNTRY LIFE later this year.

Stubbs is revealed in this exhibition as a more varied painter than one supposed. Consider only the two lovely pictures *Reapers* and *Haymakers* (lent anonymously), which were painted in 1784 and shown at the Royal Academy two years later. These canvases, which at first sight seem so careless and carefree, are the result of determined compositional devices: it might even be possible to discover that some of the figures were derived from earlier painters.

Also, Stubbs's scientific prowess is stressed by his remarkable paintings of animals, of which two were commissioned by Dr. William Hunter, especially the fascinating (if dirt-obscured) picture *A Cheetah with Two Indians* (Fig. 5), from the collection of Brigadier-General Sir Robert Pigot, Bart., painted to commemorate the gift to George III of this animal by Lord Pigot, Governor of Madras. But Stubbs was not only an effective portraitist of animals: his self-portrait, his portrait of Josiah Wedgwood of 1780 (Fig. 4), lent by Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood, and that of the groom in the Hambletonian picture underline his ability to strike a lively image—that same quality which distinguishes his memorable paintings of horses.

5.—*A CHEETAH WITH TWO INDIANS.* In the collection of Brig.-Gen. Sir Robert Pigot, Bart.

COLLECTORS' QUESTIONS

WALLPAPER PANELS

I ENCLOSE two photographs of some late-18th-century paper panels. They are decorated in a great range of colours and have narrow flock paper borders, and each one measures 9 ft. by 9½ ins. Though at one time placed at intervals round the walls of a room in an old house, they were obviously intended originally for use on pilasters, and I should be grateful if anyone can tell me about similar examples. I am, incidentally, already aware of those at Milton Abbas, Dorset.—A. K. LEASK (Mrs.), 418, Harold's Cross-road, Terenure, Dublin.

The panels of wallpaper in the photographs appear to be printed in distemper colours from wood blocks and to date between 1780 and 1791. They are in a style made famous by J. B. Réveillon at his factory in the Rue de Montreuil, off the Faubourg St. Antoine, Paris; the designers working for Réveillon who were chiefly responsible for Pompeian ornament in this manner were Cietti and Jean Baptiste Fay. Reproductions in colour of vertical panels made at this factory can be seen in Pierre Gusman's *Panneaux Décoratifs et Tentures Murales du XVIII Siècle*, Paris, 1913.

The possibility that these panels are of English origin, *circa* 1790, cannot be entirely ruled out. Both Eckhardt and Sherringham had factories in Chelsea where French designers were employed, and Sherringham in particular had a reputation for papers with arabesque designs in the Pompeian style. Although the style originated in Anglo-Italian circles in the 1760s, it was never much in demand for English wallpapers, and no papers of this type by Sherringham can be identified to-day.

The backs of the papers might be examined for duty stamp marks. If no marks are to be found, the papers were probably imported from France, for, although a duty was imposed at this date on both French and English (but not Chinese) papers, no example of a French imported paper is known to have been stamped. Somewhat similar papers printed at the Réveillon factory after designs by Fay were taken from a house at Longford, Newport, Shropshire, and are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. These are not stamped.

It may be doubted whether such vertical strips of paper were necessarily intended for use on pilasters. They could equally well have been used to divide broader panels of the same genre or panels of plain coloured paper.

We are indebted to the Department of Engraving, Illustration and Design at the Victoria and Albert Museum for the above information.

FOUR PANELS OF WALLPAPER WITH POMPEIAN TYPE OF ORNAMENT, *circa* 1790. (*Right*) DETAIL OF TWO OF THE STRIPS

See question: Wallpaper Panels

A 16th-CENTURY DOCTOR?

From Lord Rennell

I shall be glad to have the assistance of COUNTRY LIFE *in identifying the portrait seen in the enclosed photograph. The portrait is painted on a heavy panel of some wood such as walnut, chestnut or possibly even oak. It has been without much evidence attributed to Moroni. On a page of the book under the left arm of the sitter there is an inscription, a part only of which is decipherable to me but which could perhaps be deciphered by greater experts than myself. The only part of the inscription which is clear is the date, An° Domini 1560. I suggest that the subject may be a doctor or surgeon. While the skull may only represent a* vanitas, *the fact that there is a book or scroll under the left arm and a scalpel or forceps in the right hand seems to suggest a closer connection of the objects represented with the sitter than merely a symbolism of the uncertainty of life.*—RENNELL, 23, Great Winchester-street, London, E.C.2.

The portrait is certainly not by Moroni, nor, one would suppose, from the south side of the Alps. It may be of Swiss or South German provenance. Lord Rennell enclosed with the photograph of the portrait an enlargement showing the inscription on the book, but practically nothing can be made out after the date with which it begins.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN WITH A SCALPEL, SKULL AND BOOK. THE DATE 1560 IS INSCRIBED ON THE BOOK

See question: A 16th-century Doctor?

LOVE TOKENS

I should be grateful for information about some old copper coins or tokens I have. The "Token of Love, 1832," given by "S. H. to J. Harris," is a thick piece of metal 1⅜ in. in diameter; there is another similar one, but rather larger, inscribed on one side "Joseph Harris Born May 18th 1831" and on the other side "The Son of Joseph and Elizabeth Harris. J.H." The other two coins, from Sydney, Australia, and Auckland, New Zealand, are both slightly larger than a penny.—E. A. S., London, E.C.2.

The heavy twopenny and penny pieces issued in 1797 and known as the "cartwheel" twopence and penny were much used for love tokens of the kind obtainable at fairs. These coins when worn or rubbed down provided a suitable surface for lettering either pounced or lightly engraved. The J. Harris token reproduced on the left with the verse

When this you see remember me
untill i get my liberty

is a characteristic example and was doubtless presented by a sailor or soldier to his Gill.

The Australian and New Zealand "pennies" were really more in the class of advertisements than tokens.

"CARTWHEEL" PENNY USED FOR A LOVE TOKEN, DATED 1832, WITH A RHYME ON THE REVERSE. (*Right*) PENNIES EMPLOYED AS ADVERTISEMENTS FROM SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, AND AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND (1862)

See question: Love Tokens

AN ANIMAL PAINTER OF FLORENCE

An oil painting of a pointer retrieving duck has recently come into my possession. I enclose a photograph of it. The picture appears to be by an Italian painter, whose signature, as best as I can decipher it, is "M. Meucci, 1890. Firenze." The measurements are 39 ins. by 25 ins., so that the dog is nearly life-size. I should like to find out the origin of the painting, having kept pointers myself.—A. M. ASTINGTON (Miss), 17, Elmsleigh-road, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

The signature on the picture is that of a Florentine painter, M. Meucci. Although no published details of his life and work have been discovered, several paintings similarly signed, but dated in the 1870s, have appeared in the London sale-rooms in the last year or two. The subjects were principally living and dead birds, and the signature was in each case followed by the date and the town of the artist's residence "Firenze." It is strange that an animal painter of such evident ability should have escaped the notice of the compilers of British and Continental works of reference. Recognition by collectors of the quality of his pictures is indicated by the substantial sums paid for them when they come on the market.

A POINTER RETRIEVING DUCK, A PAINTING BY M. MEUCCI, OF FLORENCE, SIGNED AND DATED 1890

See question: An Animal Painter of Florence

FOUR LITTLE GIRLS

I enclose a photograph of an oil painting which has been in the family for many years. I wonder if you, or any of your readers, could help me in tracing the origin of the picture and the name of the painter. I have been led to believe that the picture portrays the four daughters of George II.—YVETTE R. CLEGG (Mrs.), Kenilworth House, 24, Denton-road, Eastbourne, Sussex.

The children in this portrait group were the four daughters of Sir Matthew Decker (1679-1749), a native of Amsterdam who settled in London as a merchant and made a fortune. From 1713 to 1743 he was a director, and for part of the time Governor, of the East India Company. He lived in St. James's-square and also had a house on Richmond Green, where he entertained George I, by whom he was made a baronet. He wrote on economics and also on landscape gardening, in which context he is mentioned in Mr. Collins Baker's *James Brydges, Duke of Chandos*. In 1739 Chandos's son, Lord Carnarvon, was said to be about to marry one of the Decker girls, but he did not do so.

The painter of the picture was J. de Meyer, whose signature with the date 1725(?) is on the flat surface above the bas-relief. There is another version, also signed, at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The mother of the girls was Henrietta, daughter of Dr. Richard Watkins, Rector of Whichford, Warwickshire.

INVENTOR AND ARTIST

I enclose a photograph of an oil painting of a lady by the American portrait painter, Linus Yale. It was painted, I imagine, about a hundred years ago, and it has been in the possession of my family for some 55 years. I am anxious to trace the lady's descendants and to have some light thrown on the history of the painting. The artist, who was born in 1821 and died in 1868, turned from portrait-painting to invent the Yale lock.—HILDA BERRY WILLEY (Mrs.), Little Gaddesden House, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

Linus Yale, besides inheriting the mechanical genius of his father, had a natural artistic aptitude, and as a young man he devoted much of his time to portrait-painting. But after establishing himself in business, independently of his father, at Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, he found less opportunity to indulge his hobby. He brought out a number of ingenious improvements to the bank lock which his father had invented, and between 1860 and 1865 patented the cylinder lock with flat key which bears his name. He died suddenly at the age of 47. Having become an expert in all matters concerning locks and safes, he can have found little time for painting in his later years.

The ability and feeling evident in this portrait make one wonder why so little is known about his work as an artist. There is no mention of Linus Yale in Mantle Fielding's *Dictionary of American Painters* or in Thieme-Becker's monumental compilation. It is probable that his portraits were painted mainly for relatives and friends, and it is a reasonable suggestion that the lady may have been connected with the Yale family.

A LINK WITH SHERIDAN

Having bought at a local dealer's shop a print published in London by Robert Wilkinson, November 28, 1782, and portraying Sir William Draper, I was surprised to find on the back of it the thoughtful inscription: "Once the property of R. B. Sheridan, purchased at Frampton Court Sale 1931." Can you tell me who Sir William was and what was his connection, if any, with the great writer?—R. L. M. BROWN, 117, Forest-road, Melksham, Wiltshire.

Sir William Draper (1721-1787) was a soldier of distinction who served in India, and in 1762 was the army commander of the expedition that captured Manilla from the Spaniards. In 1779 he was appointed lieutenant-governor of Minorca under the Honourable James Murray and was present during the siege which ended in February, 1782, with the capitulation of the garrison.

THE FOUR DAUGHTERS OF SIR MATTHEW DECKER, BART., BY J. DE MEYER, SIGNED WITH THE DATE 1725(?)

See question: Four Little Girls

Draper, who was a lieutenant-general when he retired, spent his last years chiefly at Bath, where, no doubt, he met Thomas Sheridan and his brilliant son, the dramatist. The grandson of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who bore the same christian names, married the heiress of Frampton Court, Dorset.

Questions intended for these pages should be addressed to the Editor, COUNTRY LIFE, *2-10, Tavistock-street, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply. A photograph or a careful drawing is often helpful, but in no case should originals be sent. Not more than two questions should be submitted at one time.* **It is regretted that estimates of market values cannot be given,** *nor is advice offered to readers about ways and means of disposing of their possessions.*

PORTRAIT OF AN UNIDENTIFIED LADY BY LINUS YALE, THE INVENTOR OF THE LOCK

See question: Inventor and Artist

FINE WOMEN'S HOCKEY AT WEMBLEY

By MARJORIE POLLARD

THERE is always something attractive and intriguing about any hockey match between England and Ireland. The very colours—England in cardinal red and Ireland in emerald green—make the teams stand out in vivid contrast, and so it is with the style of play and the methods employed. These things combined made last Saturday's women's match at Wembley a thrilling encounter. When England beat Ireland by 2 goals to 0 excitement and interest were at a high pitch and the game was well worthy of the series which has now spread over sixty years.

It was due to the Irish Ladies' Hockey Union, which was formed in 1894, that the All England Women's Hockey Association came into being. The Irish invited some players over to Dublin to take part in an "international" match. The brave souls who went, mostly from Newnham and Girton, returned fired with the idea of a national association. So in 1896—and in comparative secrecy (otherwise the games were broken up by angry male spectators)—England played Ireland in Dublin and lost by 2 goals to 0. The next year, on the Rectory Field, Blackheath, another match between the two countries ended in a goalless draw. It also produced the following Minute in the Association records: "That the All England Women's Hockey Association does not countenance advertising by posters in public places or in newspapers." The facts that this match had been played in semi-public and had, indeed, been advertised shocked many parents, players and organisers.

Since that goalless draw in 1897, England has won every match except those in 1902, 1908 and 1950, and has never lost to Ireland in England.

When it was decided to move the women's international match from Kennington Oval to Wembley Stadium in 1951, it was somehow natural that Ireland should be the first opponents on the historic occasion. So, when they came to the vast arena, they had the year before beaten England by 5 goals to 3, and to get a crowd of any dimensions for this match all possible means of advertising had to be used, in direct contrast to the early policy of the Association. A record number for hockey of 36,000 saw England beat Ireland 6 to 1. It was a tremendous and tumultuous occasion.

And what of 1957? Ireland came to Wembley having lost to England last year by a mere 1-2. They came with a fine team, experienced, unaffected by the big place or occasion, and with three inside forwards, D. Ferguson, T. Hopkins and M. Hopkins, capable of piercing any defence in the world. And so it is not surprising that the crowd, drawn from all over the country, numbered nearly 50,000. The game they saw in no way disappointed them; indeed, after 70 minutes of swift-moving hockey, England were perhaps fortunate to win by that margin of 2 goals.

The pitch at Wembley was just about perfect and the ball ran as accurately as the players made it. There could be no excuses for mishitting or bad timing, and as the game wore on such early faults disappeared.

The game started with an Irish flurry, when the centre-forward, Thelma Hopkins (the Olympic silver medallist high-jumper), was all but through the English defence. Had she succeeded, and had Ireland been able to establish that early lead, the score in this very even match could easily have gone the other way. England having thus been spared a goal, very soon the defence regained its poise and its undoubted power; when that was done the English forwards were set in motion. They never really gained the upper hand, as the Irish defence, who have a reputation for being inclined to panic when under constant pressure, soon proved that reputation to be untrue.

After about twenty minutes of raid and counter-raid, with brilliant bouts of goalkeeping at either end, the great crowd roaring and swaying as the game hurtled from end to end, England were awarded a penalty corner. The hit was well taken by B. Burgum, the right wing, and before anyone was aware, M. Beattie, with the speed of thought, had cracked the ball into the goal. England were one up, but that spurred Ireland into greater efforts. They forced several corners, but the English defence positioned themselves too well, or else the corners were badly taken, and no goals resulted.

So came half time with both teams looking a little weary and with the game in such a state that no one in his senses would have dared to prophesy the result.

For most of the second half England had to defend a great deal, and much praise is due to the goalkeeper, M. Tatlock, E. Delforce, the captain and right back, and P. Park, the left back. With a keen, eager-to-attack half-back line in front of them, these imperturbable backs saw to it that the Irish forwards were seldom allowed time and space in which to shoot. Time and time again an Irish forward would arrive at last with the ball, but still there remained one more defence player (and the goalkeeper) to beat. The calm, clever playing of the English defence when really threatened was an object lesson.

In that flying second half all three of the Irish inside forwards made bids for the goal, and Thelma Hopkins even hit the goalpost with a tremendous shot, but they were never really allowed to manœuvre to get comfortable for taking the shot at goal that would be successful. Meanwhile England turned defence into attack with great speed; the quest for a goal to clinch the victory was always apparent. The Irish captain, S. Murnaghan, and her fellow back, C. Brown, really covered themselves with glory at this period of the game. If fault there was in the Irish defence it was with the half-backs. Their dilemma was whether to back up their forwards and try to help with goal-getting, or to hang back to stop the English counter-attack that inevitably came. At times they were caught in the half-court, but it could well be that a full-scale policy of attack would have paid hands down.

So, with the game drawing to its end and with a slight English win in view, or at the worst a draw (and how that would have raised the crowd!), the English right inside, C. Vincent, received a beautiful pass from E. Delforce at right back. It was timed and placed to a nicety. C. Vincent, who had been comparatively quiet, then proceeded with great skill and determination to thread her way through an astonished Irish defence. She veered so far to her left that she seemed to be making shooting a near impossibility; but with a quick half turn of her body she hit the ball in no uncertain fashion, and goal it was. England were 2, Ireland 0, and a game that could have easily been a draw became an almost resounding win.

Having either played in or seen most of the matches between the two countries since 1921, I can truthfully say that Ireland has at this moment a set of defence players of whom any country could be proud. They have become astute, calm and very watchful. Whereas in the excitement of a game they have been given to rushing in to tackle in the past, they now bide their time, make certain and then move into position with great effect. On Saturday their forwards were fast and persistent, but spoiled several promising movements by passing forward rather than to each other on the edge of the circle. It looked as if they were hopeful of mistakes in the English defence. There was none.

So England have maintained their record of never having been beaten by Ireland in England nor having been beaten by anyone at Wembley.

AN INCIDENT IN THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY MATCH BETWEEN ENGLAND AND IRELAND AT WEMBLEY, WHICH ENGLAND WON BY 2 GOALS TO NIL. M. Beattie, the English centre-forward, tries to get the ball past two Irish players

FINE SPRING SALMON

By KENNETH DAWSON

I SUPPOSE one reason why spring salmon always seem so much more beautiful than those we catch at other times of the year is that they come after the long winter. Yet their beauty is not altogether an optical illusion or wishful thinking because, by and large, spring salmon are fatter and in better condition than those which run in summer. The reason for this is that they have had the benefit of the best period of feeding in the sea, which is in late summer and early autumn—a period missed by the summer fish, running from May to July.

Hutton ascribes this to an arrangement of nature to provide for the longer time that will be spent in fresh water, which is, for all practical purposes, a period of fasting, and during which the fish has to subsist on its reserves of fat. All things considered, the survival of spring salmon, which may in some cases enter a river in November or December, and very often in January and February, and live for 10 to 12 months without a single real meal, is one of the greatest of nature's miracles.

In cold climates many creatures hibernate during the winter and take no food at all from late autumn until spring. But during this time they are inert and therefore make the minimum demands on the stores of fat which they have accumulated. But the case of the salmon is utterly different. Far from being comatose it is living an active, even strenuous, life: working its way up the river in stages, and overcoming obstacles which often demand extremely severe exertion. No wonder the spring fish is a poor creature and its flesh pale and almost tasteless, when caught in the autumn; for every ounce of the once abundant fat, or "curd," with which it left the sea has been drained away to keep it alive and nourish the developing milt or ova.

It is a great pity that all anglers cannot be made to realise how stupid, almost criminal, it is to kill these poor creatures. Unfortunately, to so many a salmon is a salmon no matter what its condition or when it was caught. Even worse is the poaching on the redds of those in the act of spawning, and yet someone must buy this wretched food.

TWO SPRINGERS FROM THE TAVY, WEIGHING RESPECTIVELY 16½ lb. AND 16 lb.

FISHING THE WYE, WHERE THE MOST IMPORTANT CLASS OF SALMON IS THE LARGE SPRINGER. "By and large, spring salmon are fatter and in better condition than those which run in summer"

We do not, it is true, emulate the Americans who flock to the River Miramichi in New Brunswick to fish deliberately and legally for kelts. As soon as the ice melts the season for "black" salmon, as they are called, begins. The regulations compel the use of barbless hooks and permit a limit of five kelts a day to be landed, one of which may be retained. It is almost incredible, but actually true, that these literally "poor fish" are packed in ice and despatched to the friends of the "sportsmen" back home.

It is estimated that at least a thousand kelts are killed annually, and as the proportion of fish which spawn more than once in this river is 15 per cent., it represents a very considerable drain on the stock. If this is a fair sample of North American salmon conservation it is no wonder that the Atlantic salmon has disappeared from so many rivers there. The several species used in canning are in all cases Pacific salmon, *Oncorhynchus*, some of which are of no value from a sporting point of view.

While there is only one species of salmon in the rivers of the British Isles there are many types, and very great variation in their distribution. For example, in the Wye the most important class is the large springer which has spent three years feeding in the sea, migrating in most cases after two years in the river of its birth. They make up over 37 per cent. of the stock.

In the Scottish Dee, on the other hand, the early fish are mostly a year younger; the small springers and the large springers are only 3 per cent. of the stock. Yet the Dee has a run of heavy salmon of altogether different shape and type in the autumn. Dee spring fish are also smaller than those of the same age in the Wye, the average being only 7½ lb. compared with 11½ lb.

There is another curious discrepancy in the incidence of the various classes of salmon. Why is it that the large springers are such an important class in many of our rivers, whereas the large summer fish are few and far between almost everywhere? In the Wye they are less than 2 per cent. of the total stock, and I know of no river where they are numerous.

Then we come to the class of salmon of which every angler hopes he will land at least one—the very large springers which have spent four years in the sea, and are therefore, in the majority of cases, six years old. Unfortunately, most of us live out our fishing lives without hooking one of these leviathans, and it is really only in the large rivers such as the Wye, Tay Tweed, Awe and others of the same type that there is better than a million-to-one chance of ever meeting the 40-, 50-, or even 60-pounders, which in almost all cases belong to this class.

Even in the Wye they constitute only just over 2 per cent. of the stock. The average weight of those caught is about 34 lb. The vast majority are cocks, as it is exceptional for a hen to remain for more than three years in the sea before returning to spawn. This is why females over 30 lb. are comparatively rare, and the exceptions are in most cases fish which have spawned before. A remarkable female specimen was picked up dead in the Taw in January, 1949. Some scales were sent to Mr. P. R. C. Macfarlane of the Scottish Home Office, who reported that she migrated as a two-year smolt in 1944, returned and spawned in 1946, and did so again in 1947 and 1948. Her length was 53¾ inches, so that she would have weighed about 60 lb. when in normal, fresh-run condition. A magnificent matron who had done well for her river and class!

Finally, there is another class of spring salmon which is so scarce that it has not a name of its own, the rare examples being included in the preceding category of very large springers. These are fish which have remained for five years of feeding in the sea before returning for the first time. Menzies writes: "They are so rare as to be unworthy of mention in the synopsis of the ages of the vast majority of springers," and he says he has seen the scales of only four such.

Hutton tells a tragic story about one of this class. In May, 1920, an angler hooked a very large salmon in the Wye which eventually broke him. Several days after Hutton received scales of a salmon 59½ inches in length found dead some way downstream. Unfortunately the finder, not realising that this was probably the record salmon for the British Isles, put it back into the water. A week later the head water-bailiff brought Hutton what was undoubtedly the same carcass. By this time it was very decomposed, and part of the head and lower jaw had gone. But the remains weighed 42 lb. and were 57 inches long, while the scales showed five sea years.

By the Corbett Scale based on 40, for calculating the condition of salmon, a salmon of 59½ inches would weigh 84 lb. This is, however, rather too high for Wye fish in which the Condition Factor is usually 37-38. But Hutton concludes: "We can safely say that the original weight was certainly over 60 lb., probably over 70 lb. and possibly over 80 lb." Fancy having to live with the memory of having hooked and lost a fish of this weight!

THE NORTH-EAST FRONT OF THE HOUSE

THE GARDENS OF LADHAM HOUSE, KENT

THE HOME OF SIR GEORGE JESSEL, BART.

Written and Illustrated by CHRISTOPHER LLOYD

THE PAIR OF IRISH YEWS FRAMING THE VISTA FROM THE FRONT DOOR

IT is the personal touch that gives the final cachet to a garden; without it a beautifully integrated design enriched by many varied plants will strike a chilly, soullesss note. The gardens at Ladham House, Goudhurst, Kent, possess a highly developed personality, and this they owe to Sir George Jessel, who is an actively keen gardener with a sure eye not only for plants and planting, but for what these add up to in effectiveness. This is a garden of many facets: while trees and shrubs compose the dominant theme, bulbs and herbaceous and bog plants also play an important rôle. Nor is its season concentrated on spring alone, for I know from experience that at every visit, whatever the time of year, the scene presents fresh aspects with which to delight the eye. The garden in November has given me almost as much pleasure as in May.

The house stands in a central position and, together with the main drive, bisects the garden unequally. The lesser part comprises two semi-formal compartments enclosed by walls and hedges in the old Renaissance idiom of intimacy and seclusion. From the front door a vista leads between a pair of magnificent Irish yews and along a double herbaceous border, terminated by a long garden seat. Sir George has included a high proportion of grey foliage plants in these borders, which, being all evergreens, not only prevent the scene from looking empty in winter, but are never so beautiful as at that season when illumined by low sunshine. Originally these borders were immediately backed by hedges, but Sir George had them grubbed and substituted on each side a narrow grass walk and a shrub border. The design has in this way gained in spaciousness while losing none of the intimacy of an enclosed garden. The shrub border, moreover, is full of interest.

Magnolias and camellia hybrids are its backbone. Two large specimens of *Magnolia watsonii* are a fine sight in June and July with their substantial creamy blooms and central boss of bronze-red stamens; they have a wonderful perfume, too. Sir George bought them for 5s. apiece from Japan in the 1930s. Two youngish plants of *Camellia* Donation are big enough already to be covered with scores of blooms in spring, while a mature specimen of the cultivar known variously as *Alba simplex* and White Swan is radiant with pure, single blossoms, the numerous yellow anthers showing up effectively against the white cup of petals. Almost next to this is an 18 ft. cone of the hybrid evergreen

THE HEATH GARDEN IN SPRING

Eucryphia intermedia, perhaps the finest of the tribe if obtained from the best clone. Its season is late August, but near by are *E. Nymansay* and *E. glutinosa*, which carry the season from the end of July forwards. A delightful feature at the front of these shrubs in spring are the thousands of hoop-petticoat daffodils (*Narcissus bulbocodium*). They come into flower over a long period, for there were a number of different strains in the original planting and these, in the course of time, have been greatly multiplied by intercrossing and self-sowing.

The adjacent enclosed garden is devoted mainly to hybrid tea roses. A raised border at the foot of a sunny wall contains a vivid planting of the indispensable *ligtu* hybrid alstroemerias. Returning to the house via the stables, one passes on the latter's north-facing wall (made darker yet by near-by trees) an instructive planting of the best three self-clinging flowering shrubs for such a position: *Hydrangea petiolaris*, *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* and *S. integrifolia*. These are relatives. The first of them to expand its sterile white flowers is the hydrangea, in June; the others start a month later, so that the overall season is three months long. On the house front is an eaves-high plant of the double yellow Banksian rose and a large *Clematis armandii*.

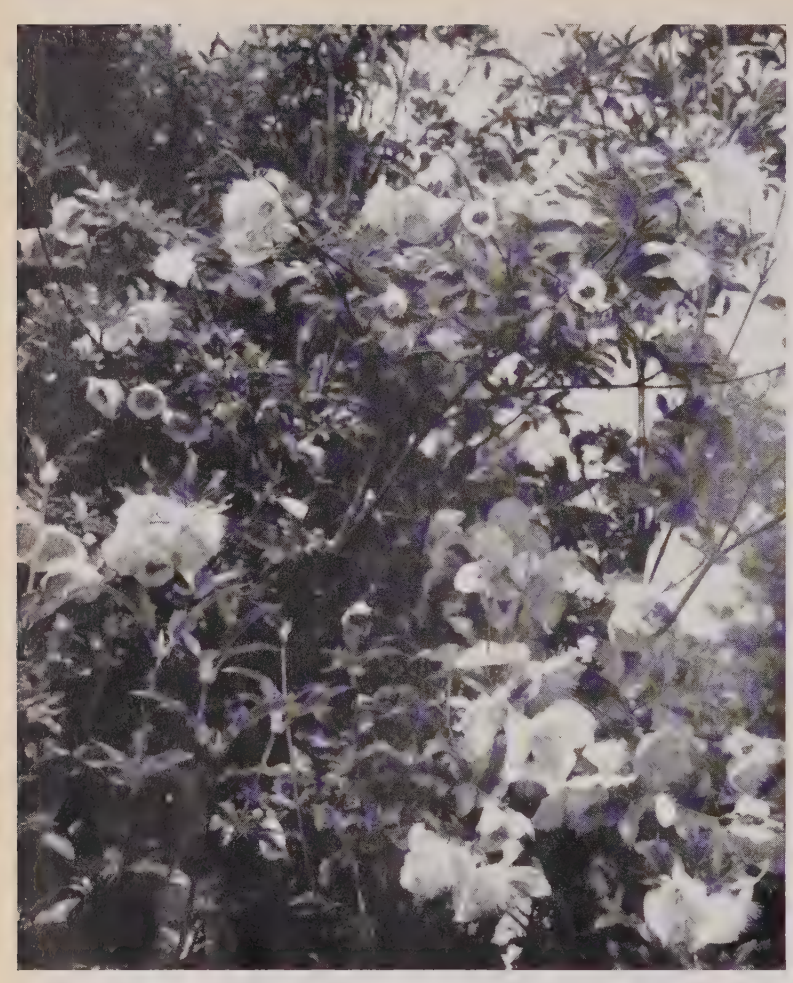
The garden's larger and more informal half is pleasantly entered by way of a garden door from the house itself. Here one steps out on to a terrace that commands a fine view to the north. One realises then how high this High Weald is at Goudhurst, on its 400 ft. ridge. Immediately ahead stretches the main garden vista, and in a broad arc to the right one looks past an arena of lawn to the heather garden and to the belt of trees and shrubs beyond, which form the woodland garden. This is a viewpoint of which I could not tire; it is spacious, conceived on generous and restful lines. Though full of interesting detail, it is never "busy" like the garden of a mere plantsman.

There were originally certain focal points in the way of trees on which to found a garden: the pair of Irish yews already mentioned, a wellingtonia on which the main vista is constructed, and a beautiful swamp cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), a species that was planted in many gardens of this part of Kent some eighty years ago. The first plans and planting were made by the late Lady Jessel (Sir George's mother) and Mr. W. Goldring, a celebrated garden designer of the Edwardian period. His vista is flanked first by two effective plantings of hydrangeas of both the mop-headed and lace-cap types; they are all blue-flowered on this soil. Then come heaths and a great wall of showy rhododendron hybrids on the left. The vista ends at a bog garden, once a pond, which is backed by a grove of trees, with the wellingtonia predominating.

Sir George has worked with his soil, not against it; as this is of an acid, sandy type one finds, as expected, a predominance of ericaceous shrubs. Finest and most exuberant of the heaths is *E. arborea alpina*, making clouds of white blossom in spring. Many of the plants of this 10-ft. shrub are self-sown. Likewise pernettyas are so much at home as sometimes to be weeds. The other tree heath to give a good account of itself is the pink-flowered *E. australis*, while the humbler kinds are freely represented by the forms of *E. carnea*, for winter and spring, and *E. vagans* and *Daboëcia cantabrica* for late summer. Their hummocked landscape is enlivened by groups of evergreen azaleas of the *obtusum* series and the pure white *Rhododendron mucronatum*, by a magnificent suckering patch of the low-growing *Kalmia angustifolia rubra* and by the solid golden masses of *Genista cinerea*.

The bog garden is, to my mind, an uncommonly successful and original feature. Many moisture-loving plants have strikingly beautiful foliage, and here they are so arranged that each large group acts as a foil to the next: such things as the royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), plantain lilies (*Hosta*

THE BOG GARDEN: BOG PLANTS NOW OCCUPY THE SITE OF A DRAINED POND



EUCRYPHIA GLUTINOSA IN THE SHRUB GARDEN

glauca), the cut-leafed rhubarb (*Rheum palmatum*), *Iris kaempferi*, water saxifrage (*Peltiphyllum peltatum*) and pampas grass—this, for once, in a worthy setting. There are, besides, masses of *Primula japonica* and *P. pulverulenta* in varied colour forms which have seeded themselves on every spare piece of soil, and a bank of blue and coloured forms of polyanthus. A 20-ft. *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* at the garden's margin is growing apace and must be one of the tallest in the country.

Here one is on the brink of the woodland, entered by a glade in which silver birch trunks rise pillar-like from a golden floor of Fortune daffodils. This wood garden, started in 1929, is all of Sir George's making. It is long and narrow and can be looked at from either of two main viewpoints; seen from the outside its marginal plantings have importance in their contribution to the general garden scene, whereas from inside it is the plants as individuals or in small groups that one is enjoying, as the path takes its meandering course. A visitor familiar with the Kentish climate will be surprised to see numbers of flourishing shrubs, particularly rhododendrons, which he would not have credited with sufficient hardiness. For it must be remembered that as soon as one gets well inland here, in south-east England, the climate has a Continental quality that is severe on broad-leafed evergreens in winter and frequently inflicts long spells of no more welcome drought during the spring and early summer months. Sir George has taken care to maintain as much shelter for his shrubs as is consistent with their getting enough light.

Even following the trials of February last year, a 10-ft. specimen of *Rhododendron strigillosum* was covered, in early April, with perfect trusses of its deep red flowers. As one would expect, rhododendrons are predominant in this woodland setting. It is possible to select only a few of them for mention here. *R. euchaites*, which may be simply a woodland form of *R. neriiflorum*, is a lovely thing, again in early April, never failing to bear a huge crop of blood-red flowers in loose umbels; *R. shilsonii*, coming before *R. thomsonii*, is another good red with pleasing foliage and satin-smooth bark. The species *falconeri*, *macabeanum* and *fictolacteum* all contribute nobly with their foliage; the first of these also bloomed abundantly last year. A plant of *R. repens* on a rocky ledge is 5 ft. across; it flowers regularly, though not freely. In May I would give top marks to the *loderi* hybrids King George and Venus; Sir George's plants came from the Leonardslee stud. Here are shrubs supreme for quality and spectacle, possessing, moreover, a delicate but delicious scent. Almost as good is a 12-ft. plant of *R.* Cornish Cross with loose trusses of large blooms in a particularly telling and subtle pink shading, darker out than in and with still deeper pink veining.

Large and shapely shrubs that can give a good account of themselves at the turn of July and August are the more valuable for being so rare; when these are rhododendrons of the highest order there is real cause for excitement. Such is the large white and exotically perfumed Polar Bear, of which there are here two specimens of tree-like proportions. Both are children of Mr. J. B. Stevenson's original *diaprepes x auriculatum* cross made in 1933, but are quite different in habit; one is tall, rather leggy and flowers the earlier, while the other is clothed with branches right to the ground and is not in full bloom till the second week in August.

There are many further notable trees and shrubs in this woodland garden. *Cornus kousa* is a distinguished species, holding thousands of white flowers in table-flat layers for a whole month at midsummer, while the foliage colours splendidly for a fortnight in October. It shows *C. k. chinensis* up poorly by contrast, for in the latter variety the flowers, though larger, are not so prolific and there are no autumn tints. At the turn of June and July *Styrax obassia* is hung with racemes of snowy white bloom; this, with quite a long flowering season, is a far more satisfactory species, Sir George finds, than the better-known *S. japonica*, which grows near by and is at its best for a mere five days or so. A third styrax, *S. hemsleyana*, of a tall fastigiate habit, grows in another part of the garden. The handkerchief tree (*Davidia vilmoriniana*) is now some 30 ft. tall; though planted 24 years ago, it has flowered only in the past three. Close to it a specimen of *Halesia monticola* is already 20 ft. high and is regularly hung with its greenish white snowdrop flowers, while in a bed of deciduous azaleas at the wood's edge a 30 ft. *Arbutus menziesii* demonstrates how outstanding an evergreen tree this can be. A beautiful though none too easy plant for the acid woodland floor that flourishes here is *Shortia uniflora grandiflora*, with cushions of large, blush pink blooms in early spring.

RHODODENDRON LODERI KING GEORGE IN BLOOM. **"Supreme for quality and spectacle, possessing, moreover, a delicate but delicious scent"**

A GATHERING OF GEESE

Written and Illustrated by W. KENNETH RICHMOND

IT was one of those comfortless, fill-dyke days. Smothered in cloud, the green hills of Galloway looked strangely glum and the waters of Loch Ken, usually so blue and calm, were dark and angry in the fading half-light. Pigeon filed shrilly along the riverside, cheerful as ever, and a herd of whooper swans trumpeted in the distance; but all in all the afternoon's jaunt had been a disappointment. Trudging back to the road, I climbed the last fence and suddenly found myself face to face with an oldish man crouching low in the ditch bottom. With his gun across his knees and the rain dripping from the peak of his cap, he had the world-well-lost look of the true wild-fowler—"a desolation, a simplicity," as Wordsworth called it. Beside him a black Labrador lay patiently in the grass.

"Any luck?" I asked.

The old fellow shook his head. "Nae," he said, "'tis a poor year for the geese." Before Christmas there had been tolerably good sport, but since the New Year the numbers had dwindled almost to vanishing point, the result, he thought, of the unseasonably mild weather and weeks of heavy gales. Nothing like a really hard spell for bringing in the big battalions.

In the ordinary way I am afraid I do not pay much attention to the opinions of week-end wild-fowlers: either they are too local to have any general application or they are based entirely on guesswork. For once, however, I was inclined to agree. In the west of Scotland, where the grey lag is much the commonest grey goose, the gaggles had been relatively few and far between this winter. In several inland resorts, in the Clyde Valley for example, where normally one can count on seeing them in their hundreds and even thousands, the geese had either failed to show up at all or had been represented by a mere handful.

In the east, where the pink-foot predominates, it seemed to have been much the same story. After a promising start—I remember a late autumn day on Loch Leven when they filled "the loud October sky" with their clamour—the multitudes had dispersed, vanishing as it were into thin air, though just how a horde of 10,000 geese, roughly one-fifth of the world population of this species, contrives to vanish into thin air is a mystery. No doubt, after their landfall in this country, many of them carried on "furth of Scotland," as the saying is north of the Border. Twelve months ago pink-feet used to drop in to roost on the mud flats of Aberlady Bay in their thousands. This year only two or three hundred have done so, and then only very infrequently.

Now seeing that both grey lags and pink-feet have been steadily increasing during recent years, this apparent set-back was at once puzzling and disheartening. As my wild-fowler friend observed, 1956 was notorious for its wretched summer in Great Britain, so it was no wonder that this had turned out to be "a bad year for the geese." In the high latitudes, after all, some species do not attempt to breed at all when conditions are too severe. Against this, as I pointed out, there was no reliable evidence to prove that the season of 1956 had been a blank; and in any case, neither the grey lag nor the pink-foot could rightly be described as Arctic species. The old fellow stuck to his original theory: it was the prolonged mildness and the strong winds which were to blame. Nothing like a good old-fashioned winter to bring in the geese. Like most wayside discussions, this one could have gone on all night, and rather than outstay my welcome—it was now near flighting time and the steady drizzle turning into a downpour—I left him to his bleak vigil. Good luck to him and all his kind, I thought, as I turned for the lighted village.

Just how unreliable personal impressions can be was shown three days later when I returned to the same place and found the geese there in strength. Even at a distance, the nasal chuntering of the grey lags and the unmistakable *wink-wink* of the pink-feet could be heard as they paraded shoulder to shoulder, snip-snipping at the sweet grass on the slopes of a little hillock. This hillock, or "drum" as they call it in Kirkcudbrightshire, is famous not so much for the numbers of geese which it attracts as for the variety. Indeed, there have been times when as many as six different species have crowded on to its few green acres at the same time, a record which it is safe to say is unequalled anywhere else in Britain.

This morning I had to be content with four—grey lags, pink-feet, bean and Greenland white-fronts. The latter were in a huddle on the wet, rushy ground at the foot of the hill,

BEAN GOOSE, ONE OF THE FOUR SPECIES OF GEESE SEEN TOGETHER IN KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE BY THE AUTHOR. **The bean is now a rare species, but was much more common fifty years ago**

most of them snoozing with their heads tucked in between their shoulders. Best of all were the bean geese, the birds I had travelled so far to see: a hefty-looking lot, so dark that they appeared to be almost soot-coloured. Then the sun broke through and showed up their true colours, warm brown with paler barrings across their backs and vivid orange-red legs. In this bunch, between forty and fifty all told, the so-called yellow-billed and black-billed varieties were equally represented, and there were so many intermediate types that there seemed to be no point in trying to discriminate between them. Was Abel Chapman right when he wrote: "These variations are purely individual, dependent on age and sex, and have no systematic value," I wondered.

For once I looked in vain for the odd lesser white-fronts which for the past three years have never failed to accompany this particular flock. For that matter, it was disappointing to find that the numbers of the bean themselves were down. Normally they turn up here at the end of January, when one can expect to see as many as 200 together. Once again I was reminded of the wild-fowler's lament. Was 1957, in fact, "a bad year for the geese"?

The trouble is that it is virtually impossible for any individual to keep track of the movements of the geese, let alone pretend to understand them. Only by taking a broad canvas, which means covering at least half of the Northern Hemisphere, and studying these movements over a period of years, can anything like a true picture be gained. Even so, the case of the bean goose is interesting, for there is no doubt that its status in Britain has undergone something of a sea-change within living memory. Allowance must, of course, be made for the fact that in the old days wild geese were often wrongly identified: there are even "records" of bean geese having bred in Scotland, which shows that they were sometimes confused with the grey lag as well as with the pink-foot.

Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that the bean was once much commoner and more widespread than it is to-day. Sir Hugh Gladstone, in his *Birds of Ayrshire*, and George Bolam, in his *Birds of Northumberland and the Eastern Borders*, make it quite clear that this was the typical grey goose in their parts of the world until the turn of the century. It goes without saying that both were reliable observers. Bolam, indeed, states categorically: "It must undoubtedly be ranked as the most common of our Grey Geese next to that species [the pink-foot]. I have examined many specimens, killed on the coast as well as on farms inland, and have been at considerable pains to make sure that some of the flocks seen consisted of this species, and not the other."

This, surely, is convincing enough. Short of dismissing all the late-19th-century reports as hearsay, the conclusion must be that the bean goose has gradually been replaced, if not actually ousted, by the pink-foot. At any rate, the bean has become, if not exactly a *rara avis*, the most local and thinly distributed of all the grey geese which regularly winter in these islands. Like Bolam, I first encountered them 30 years ago on the Northumbrian loughs. While it would be wrong to say that they no longer occur there from time to time, they certainly do not appear anything like so regularly or in the same numbers as formerly. Moreover, they have disappeared from most of their traditional haunts. In fact, so far as I know, this spot in Galloway is nowadays the only one where they can still be seen in any numbers, though there is another (in Norfolk) where the chances of finding a gaggle or two remain fairly good.

One explanation for this gradual decline is that the bean population has been tampered with at the source as a result of industrial developments in the birds' breeding grounds. I have even heard it said that living conditions in Soviet forced labour camps in the Siberian tundra may be partly responsible, the workers being so short of food that they are driven to poaching the geese during the close season. Such explanations are only satisfying up to a point. For one thing, they fail to tell us why these geese no longer migrate to Britain in autumn as they once did. By all accounts, the bean geese wintering on the Continent are as numerous as ever, but for some reason they cross the North Sea only when hard weather forces them to make the move. Here in Galloway, certainly, they rarely or never appear before the end of January, which suggests that the resort is now used only as a second best, so to speak.

My own theory, if it can be called that, is that this withdrawal of the bean geese has been brought about by the steady build-up in the numbers of grey lags and pink-feet. A century ago the grey lag was pre-eminently a goose of the saltmarsh: to-day it is very largely a bird of the inland pastures. It is at least conceivable, therefore, that many of the beans' favourite haunts have been taken over by new competitors and that the fly-lines which once carried them south-west have been abandoned in favour of routes which now lie more directly north-south.

But why should the remnant choose to turn up so unfailingly in this little green plot in Kirkcudbrightshire? Why not elsewhere? As to that, one can only suppose that geese possess something akin to folk-memory and that their traditional ways, though forsaken, are not entirely forgotten. Alternatively, and more honestly, perhaps, one may confess that only the geese themselves know the answers to such questions.

GARDENING FALLACIES

Written and Illustrated by MICHAEL HAWORTH-BOOTH

IT is surprising how many old wives' tales, myths and fallacies concerning country matters still persist. One of these concerns the application of artificial lime to lawns and beds devoted to ornamental plants. I remember many years ago looking at shelves full of learned books on turf culture in the office of a man whose livelihood depended upon the fineness of the turf on the world-famous greens of his golf course. He turned to me and said: "I can almost give you a précis of all that in one sentence: the fineness of the turf varies as the acidity of the soil. I'd top-dress with peat all the time."

For cattle fodder plenty of strong, coarse grass is wanted and the production of this is stimulated by the artificial liming that is, anyhow, necessary to replace the lime taken off the land in the milk and in the bones of the beasts sold away. But the lawn in the pleasure garden wants the fine grasses of natural acid soil; liming will only discourage these to the benefit of the competing coarser sorts.

HYDRANGEA AND EVERGREEN AZALEA IN A DRIP BED THE FIRST YEAR AFTER PLANTING. This bed has been constructed to receive the whole of the drip from a long glass roof; the results show, says the author, that drip does nothing but good, contrary to what is often assumed. (*Below*) THE SAME AFTER FOUR YEARS. The hydrangea has almost swamped the azalea, which has itself doubled in size

As regards ornamental plants, none of these is benefited by artificial liming and many are prevented from growing healthfully. Flowering shrubs and trees, in particular, are in many cases ruined or killed outright if dressings of lime alter the natural proper acidity of the soil to alkalinity. Camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas, heaths of the summer-flowering sorts, kalmias, etc., will not live; hydrangeas have their flowers turned pink or red and roses become martyrs to blackspot. Unfortunately, the harm once done cannot be undone, for several decades must pass before nature can restore the natural, healthful acidity to the soil. One of the curious and interesting things revealed by research is that even lime-tolerating species are not benefited by lime. It appears that they grow on the chalk because they cannot cope with the more intense competition on acid soils. Much research was done on vines in France, where it was found that even those growing in a soil of the almost unheard of acidity of pH 4.50 were not helped by lime. The pH scale, by the way, is used to measure the acidity of soil, and I believe that the average figure for natural soil over the British Isles would rate at about pH 6.00; the most acid natural soil is about pH 5.00 and the chalkiest about pH 8.00. Although pH 7.00 is called neutral, the plants do not appear to accord with this but operate as though pH 6.50 were neutral. This seems to be because one of the evils of liminess is that it makes the mineral trace elements unavailable to the plants, and this process begins to operate at pH 6.50. It is a mistake to imagine that the ideal soil is pH 7.00 and that a more acid soil is improved by being treated with lime until it rates at this figure. The ideal *for all plants* is nearer to pH 6.00.

A plant that is often mistakenly limed is the clematis. Actually, it is usually an acid-soil-loving Japanese plant grafted on the lime-tolerating British wild clematis. All are agreed on the desirability of getting the fine variety to form its own roots above the graft, but the liming, of course, discourages this. Thus it is not surprising that the strongest clematis of

the garden sorts are to be seen growing in acid soil, where it will invariably be found that they have made strong roots of their own.

Another old stager among the fallacies concerns the supposed dire results of "drip." Having long ago suspected that this was a myth, I constructed a border designed to receive the whole of the drip from a long glass roof. For the last ten years this border has been unusually favourable to the growth of choice and difficult plants. *Raphiolepis delacourii*, rhododendron Lady Alice Fitzwilliam, *Hydrangea anomala* and *Magnolia grandiflora* Goliath enjoy the extra supply of rainwater provided by the drip, and rose Fashion is over four feet high. It is not, of course, the drip from trees overhead that interferes with plant growth; it is the cutting off of the overhead light from the foliage below by the intervening branches. Light from the sides is not strong enough to effect the photo-synthesis that builds up a plant. In windy weather most of the drops of rainwater hitting a woodland plant have hit another plant first, so that they are much the same as drip and yet do the recipient nothing but good.

It is sometimes stated that pruning a tree or shrub increases its growth, but, in fact, it merely alters its character. There is no increase, from this cause, in the dry weight of the subject. Shoot-growth increase is compensated by reduction in the amount of stem increase. By continual pruning, promoting the growth of young shoots, flowering can be postponed almost indefinitely as this usually occurs on wood that has reached the age of puberty, so to speak. Root-pruning, on the other hand, can encourage flowering, as it leads to a reduction in soft shoot growth. This is because there is a mutual regulation of growth between root and shoot. Leaf growth is influenced by the nitrogen supply from the roots and root growth is effected by the supply of carbohydrates from the leaves. According to Professor F. G. Gregory, Head of the Research Institute of Plant Physiology, London, in a lecture on November 15, 1956, the interchange of materials between leaf and root occurs by an upward path with the transpiration current, through the wood, and by a downward path in the bark. It is significant that the speed of movement in the bark is much faster than any visible physical arrangement would be likely to accomplish, and would appear to be actuated by some unknown force, possibly operated by the respiration of the carbohydrates. Thus the circulation of a tree is quite an active process. One of the most dramatic demonstrations of this occurs when a root of a walnut tree is cut in spring. The sap shoots out in regular spurts at about the same tempo as a human heartbeat.

While on the subject of trees, the old "trees rob the ground" fallacy still crops up. In fact, of course, the fertile topsoil of the earth has been formed purely by vegetation and the tree is one of the most effective forms of vegetation doing this work. There is no plant that does not give back to the earth more than it takes out. That is, of course, provided that it is left to itself; in practice the process is often interfered with. The ash tree that has sucked up nitrogen, phosphate and potash solution is not allowed to crumble back into the forest mould; it is perhaps felled and carted away to be made into a motor-car body, or the leaves may be swept up and burnt every year. In such cases there will be a loss of fertility, but the tree is not the robber. The more efficient the tree is in utilising every ray of light for its leaves and every drop of soil moisture for its roots, the more it increases the fertility of the soil. The most fertile soil I know is a patch of old yew forest that was cleared for the nurseries. The labour of taking out the dense mass of red roots was appalling, but, after years of cropping, that ground is still a little over-rich.

The bad effects of digging-in unrotted manure, leaves or sawdust are still insufficiently realised. Briefly, this unnatural action upsets the soil by interfering with the nitrifying bacteria, deflecting them from their normal work to deal with the excess new material so that a nitrogen recession takes place, rather than a gain. On the other hand, when the material is added purely as a surface mulch,

CLEMATIS MRS. CHOLMONDELEY GROWING IN ACID SOIL OF pH 5.50 IN THE DRIP BED. Clematis is often mistakenly limed; it grows best in acid soil

only good results, but care must be taken not to allow any of the mulch to get buried when one is planting, etc. It is surprising how a few fallen leaves blown into a hole left open will ruin the chances of the plant that is planted on top of them. It was, of course, to enable vegetable material, rotted at extra speed, to be rendered safe for digging-in that the composting system was evolved. In practice, the labour involved is seldom repaid unless the work is on a larger scale than that of the average-sized private garden, and there is always the danger that material that is not completely rotted may be dug-in by an inexperienced operative. With heavy clay soils the digging-in either of peat or of composted material so completely rotted that it resembles peat in appearance is certainly very beneficial, if it is well mixed up, but if the same material is merely placed on the surface it is quite surprising how quickly it gets carried down into the soil by natural forces without the heavy labour of digging. Less is actually wasted by this method, as roots, when the top growth is moved by a combination of wind and rain, move almost imperceptibly in the soil, yet sufficiently to facilitate the passage of rainwater tinctured by the mulching material to their lower extremities. On the other hand, what is buried may go on further down out of reach of even the lowest roots.

Thus we find that the more we learn about the workings of nature by modern research the more we can cut out unnecessary labours and the more we find that even the more unpopular features—ivy, wrongly called a parasite when it really exists in symbiosis with its tree; the drip that really feeds the plants below; the fallen leaves that spoil the lawn and even the wind that is often merely looked upon as an adverse factor—all have a useful part to play. We cannot single out one part of the mechanism as a criminal.

MOTORING NOTES

INEFFICIENT MAIN ROADS

By J. EASON GIBSON

READERS may recall that I have often recommended alternative routes which are quieter and pleasanter than the main roads, and often faster, because of their freedom from heavy long-distance traffic. One or two readers took me to task on the ground that the routes I suggested would soon be as busy as the main roads, if everyone took my advice. I had always felt that this complaint was unfounded, on the assumption that readers of COUNTRY LIFE were only a comparatively small proportion of the total number of motorists on our roads. However, my defence has been nullified by a recent announcement from the Automobile Association that much of their time is devoted to providing their members with routes which allow them to avoid the principal main roads.

While it is pleasant to have one's ideas confirmed by others, I hope the effect of this practice will not be to hold up in any way the Government's plans for bringing our main roads into line with modern conditions. At the present rate of increase in cars per mile of highway only a few years will be needed for traffic to be brought almost to a standstill. We are often told by experts on logistics that time is money, so the effect of ever-increasing obstruction on the roads will have a most far-reaching effect on the cost of every article moved by road. After the announcement of a project to improve roads countless committees have to be consulted; surely some means could be found of reducing the time which appears to be wasted between an announcement and the action which is required. If the present situation is allowed to continue for many more years a likely result will be that all business, professional and commercial vehicles will find their way on to what at present are alternative routes, while the week-end motorists will find their pleasure by using such roads as the Great North Road or the Holyhead Road!

CAR-DOOR DEVELOPMENTS

MANY readers must have noticed the pleasing manner in which the door of a modern refrigerator closes as compared with the door of some even expensive cars. I have often wondered why the pressure of one finger is enough to close a refrigerator door, while on a car the effort made to achieve complete sealing against dust or draughts produces a pneumatic buffer which compels one to use considerable force. A new design of door lock is now being tested and developed by the Rover Co., and its ultimate production should help to remove the irritation caused by the present type of door lock.

Like the locks on refrigerators, the new lock employs a strong spring, which has a toggle action. This means that when the handle is pulled to open the door the spring is moved so that it is set to exert its pressure to close the door. The visible portion of the door lock consists of a pair of jaws, which make contact with a simple latch pin attached to the body. As soon as the pin enters the jaws they are turned slightly downwards, and this releases the spring. When this happens the spring action takes charge and turns the jaws quickly, with the result that the latch pin is engulfed by them, thus drawing the door firmly shut. As the door closes automatically once it is within about half an inch of the fully closed position, the door sealing will already be in contact, which results in final closure being apparent only by the slight click from the lock itself.

While the spring pressure would be sufficient to keep the door shut, there is, in addition, a fine ratchet which acts as a lock. An interesting feature is that the ratchet action will allow for the amount of compression which may occur in the rubber door seals; because of this the door will be automatically adjusted to the correct position. The normal ability to lock the car by the use of the inside handle, or by external key locks is provided. An additional security measure is that the outside handle can be made free to rotate once the door is shut, thus preventing any effort to force the door open by exerting extra leverage on the handle.

Another valuable Rover development is a new type of check arm for retaining the door in the fully open position. Most of those at present in use tend to become noisy after a time, and owing to the difficulty of lubricating the vital joints, which are hidden within the door itself, become stiff in operation. The new Rover type overcomes both these disadvantages, as the surfaces on which movement takes place are of rubber, which requires no lubrication and is soundless. The check arm proper passes between two rubber rollers, and the check action is obtained when a decided swelling on the arm passes through the rollers. The resistance created by the rollers is sufficient to retain the door in the fully opened position, against the efforts of either wind or gravity.

UNTRUSTWORTHY PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS taken from a police car were recently used as evidence in a case of dangerous driving, and, while there is nothing to suggest that the decision reached in the case was other than the correct one, I feel that the use of evidence of this kind must be carefully watched. One of the falsest of truisms is that "the camera cannot lie." Apart from the fact that the camera can be used to produce trick results, and the photograph can be doctored during the developing and printing process, careful selection of the lens used and the angle at which the photograph is taken can produce results which are completely misleading to the observer. I am not suggesting that any policeman would deliberately use the camera to obtain false evidence, but that a thoughtless belief in the infallibility of photographic evidence could cause many wrong verdicts in court cases affecting motorists. A photograph showing two cars could only show their positions in relation to each other and the roadside, but would give no indication whatever as to their relative speeds. In an absurd case it would be possible to show one car passing another in an obviously dangerous manner, but if one car were stationary at the time the manœuvre might have been completed in a fraction of a second, when it was obvious that the road ahead was clear for far enough to cover the approach of any other vehicle in that fraction of time.

Thinking back, I can recall many occasions when I have seen police drivers, who are among the best and safest in the country, in such a position that if they had been photographed from the right angle they would have had great difficulty in convincing their superior or a magistrate that they had not been guilty of the most dangerous and inconsiderate driving. This fairly recent development of using cameras on police cars, imported I believe from the United States, should therefore be treated with caution.

THE GIRL CENTAUR

By HENRY TEGNER

FROM the meet at Akeld the Master drew the bracken slopes of Hambleton Hill, Gains Law, and the wood behind Gledcleuch without success. It was not until we reached the summit of Yeavering Bell that hounds gave tongue. The first whip saw the fox away on the eastern flank of the Bell. Hounds were close on him. Charles James made for the fertile valley of Glendale.

I could see hounds below me as I sat on my pony half-way down the steep slope of Yeavering Bell. They looked like a flock of white seagulls as they raced over the russet-brown bracken towards the chequered valley below. The fox crossed the main road from Wooler in England to Yetholm in Scotland. The railway, now disused, ran parallel with the road. When the fox climbed the embankment he must have run the rails as I saw hounds travelling along the railway line. They were all well together. The last I saw of the pack was when they disappeared into a big field of kale on the other side of the track.

* * *

By the time I had got down to the valley, hounds were nowhere to be seen. I found them eventually clustered around a big badger earth on the banks of the River Glen. There was only one human being with them. She was a slip of a girl on a dark-brown pony of about 13 hands. She was talking to the hounds, she named an individual here and there, she seemed to know them all. A few minutes later the Master arrived. The first whip came galloping up shortly afterwards. They took the hounds with them to draw again. I watched the girl, who rode into place behind the whip, who was following hounds. She was riding her pony bareback. The only harness was a bright yellow bridle with exceptionally long reins. It looked as if it might have been taken off an old-fashioned wooden rocking horse. The girl rode like an Indian. She kept her toes pointed downwards. Her ankle bones looked as if they were pinned on to the pony's ribs. She appeared to be part of her mount.

The girl had on a pair of orange-coloured jodhpurs. They were far too short for her, ending half-way down the calves of her legs. It was cold but she was wearing no stockings: only a pair of grey-white gym shoes. Her shepherd tartan jacket was short both in the sleeves and in the skirt. On her head she had a fore-and-aft deerstalker hat. A sensible enough headgear to keep the rain out of one's eyes and neck, but not much use to fall into.

She had an unusual Asiatic cast about her face. The outer corners of her eyes appeared to point upwards. In spite of her dark complexion she had the fresh pink colour of the traditional outdoor English girl.

When we got to the covert the Master wanted to draw; one of the hounds got himself entangled in some chicken wire fencing. The whip had to dismount to disengage the hound. The girl on the pony saw he wanted someone to hold his horse. She urged her pony into a canter by flapping the long ends of her reins on the animal's neck. She looked like a Comanche brave in a Western film. The pony responded perfectly. It was certainly a strange sight to see in an English hunting field. The girl slid off the pony's back before she stopped him. She took hold of the whip's horse and stood by the side of the covert with the two horses

* * *

Hounds drew the covert blank. It was nearly an hour before we found another fox lying out in the bracken behind the Cleugh. He was a ringer. Hounds hunted him up and down and around the hills. I was able to watch the girl from a vantage point up on the high ground. It did not seem to matter how steep the going was; she sat her pony as if she were part of it.

I asked a farmer who was riding alongside me who she was. "I believe she comes of gypsy stock," he said. "Her father lives in a disused signal cabin on the old railway line. He deals in most anything from a Glen mussel-pearl to a Fell pony. The girl lives with him; she keeps her pony on the grass of the railway embankment. No trains run on the line now."

"Can't she afford a saddle?" I asked him.

The man laughed.

"You'd never get a saddle on that animal. It's saddle shy. Anyhow she don't need no saddle; she's never used one."

I have seen some surprising sights during 30 years spent in the hunting field, especially some of the turn-outs which come out from the towns for a day's sport in the country, but this girl was sheer delight, a piece of natural, wild life, and she could certainly ride.

NEW BOOKS

THE GREAT FLOWER PAINTERS

THAT the art of botanical illustration reached its zenith in the 18th and 19th centuries was not simply due to the emergence during those 200 years of some exceptional artists. There were lesser talents than those of George Ehret and Redouté which nevertheless were stimulated by enthusiastic patrons and publishers to produce work beyond their unaided capacity: artists such as Peter Henderson, Philip Reinagle, Abraham Pether and Sydenham Edwards who were dragooned by Robert Thornton into painting a series of plates so unusual, romantic and stylised that it seems incredible they could be the work of a team and not of an individual. William Curtis, in the latter half of the 18th century, also played a leading part in searching out and controlling artists who, under his guidance, produced memorable work. It was he who discovered Sydenham Edwards and who launched James Sowerby on his distinguished career. Nearly a century later there was to be an even more productive collaboration between Sir William Hooker and that genius among lithographers Walter Hood Fitch, who published close on 10,000 drawings, many of great beauty.

Fruitful Two Centuries

Great Flower Books, 1700-1900 (Collins, £12 12s.), provides a record of these fruitful centuries in a form worthy of the greatest publishers of the period. This is a folio volume containing carefully selected examples of flower illustrations, reproduced in eight-colour photo-litho-offset, and with four separate sections of text—the first an essay on the romance of the flower book by Sacheverell Sitwell, the second an account of the illustrators of these flower books by Wilfrid Blunt, the third an introduction to the bibliography of flower books by Patrick M. Synge, and the fourth and largest the comprehensive bibliography prepared by W. T. Stearn, Sabine Wilson and Handasyde Buchanan.

This is a book which will make an equal appeal to the scholar, the artist and the collector of fine books. The production is magnificent and the names of the authors sufficiently guarantee the quality of their respective contributions. I have only one complaint—that so little mention is made of Mrs. Loudon, whose four volumes of *The Ladies Flower Garden* have been a constant source of delight and information to me for many years.

A. G. L. H.

INTRODUCTIONS TO COLLECTING

TWO books on collecting, *The Collector's Week-end Book*, by Frank Davis (Seeley, Service, 15s.), and *Collector's Progress*, by Stanley W. Fisher (Michael Joseph, 16s.), have the same aim, but approach it in different ways. Let Mr. Davis define the aim: "Here is some talk about a variety of nice things . . . not too serious but none the less designed, not to impose my views upon you, but to entice you to enjoy what I find enjoyable. I should like to think that this book can guide the poor man to derive more and more pleasure from the riches of art and craftsmanship which are available to him in a multitude of public and private collections, and enable the rich and not so rich to spend their money wisely." Both authors are well-known to collectors. Mr. Fisher has confined himself almost entirely to pottery and porcelain and has learnt the business by trial and error and his gift for making friends among the experts. Mr. Davis has a much wider range—in his own words it includes everything but stamps and match-box lids—and his gift is that of being able to present a great deal of disconnected information in an attractive way. Mr. Fisher's book is autobiographical, companionable, and as subtly persuasive, if it may be said without disrespect, as a bookie at the Derby. It is safe to say that any novice who is interested enough to pick it up is certain to have a flutter before his summer holiday is over. Mr. Davis's book is for dipping into, and how rewarding the dips are likely to be may be judged from the fact that the index contains nearly 800 entries. There could be no better general introduction to a vast subject.

F. W.

MODERN ARCHITECTURE ABROAD

IN the last decade or two Brazil has achieved a tremendous reputation in the field of modern building. It is difficult to explain this fluorescence, but easy to be struck by its products. In *Modern Architecture in Brazil* (Architectural Press, 4 gns.), Henrique E. Mindlin illustrates with numerous photographs, plans and short objective descriptions some of the country's outstanding recent buildings in all types of architecture. The *patio*, the *brise-soleil* and a domestic situation that permits a row of maids' bedrooms to be included in the plan of a typical middle-class country house may have no relation to current English architecture, but the inventiveness of the plans of these Brazilian buildings, their imaginative use of materials and the cordial alliance between up-to-date architectural technique and the country's vernacular building style, as illuminated in this book, give a fillip to the imagination that makes one itch for a pencil, a drawing-board, an enlightened local planning committee and, above all, an understanding (and preferably rich) client. In the last, at any rate, Brazilian architects seem singularly fortunate. Where they are not so fortunate, perhaps, is in an almost total lack of tradition and an atmosphere of new wealth that allows and encourages them to commit the same kind of ostentatious solecisms that one sees in the "prodigy houses" of the *nouveaux-riches* in the first Queen Elizabeth's reign. Time and a little discipline, however, should work wonders.

But it is a far cry from Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo to London or Leeds. We are closer, geographically, climatically, culturally and economically, to Frankfurt-am-Main and Bremen, and Germany too has had its architectural achievements in the difficult years since the end of the war. The best type of current German building is illustrated in *New German Architecture* (Architectural Press, 56s.), edited by Gerd Hatje, Hubert Hoffmann and Karl Kaspar, and translated by H. J. Montague. Here again the student of architecture will find buildings of interest and excitement. The editors admit, however, that "buildings which reflect the true character of our age are hard to find in Germany. In town and country alike the shapeless, the very dull, predominate by far." The same is true, unfortunately, of England.

PALM BY MARTIUS, AN ILLUSTRATION IN GREAT FLOWER BOOKS, REVIEWED ON THIS PAGE

PERIOD GUIDES

IN his foreword to *The Connoisseur Period Guides*, a series consisting of six volumes beginning with *Tudor* 1500-1603 (42s.)—the subject of this review—and ending with one devoted to the early Victorian period, Mr. Ralph Edwards, formerly Keeper of the Department of Woodwork at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who is joint editor with Mr. L. G. G. Ramsey, editor of the *Connoisseur*, emphasises that the great advantage of these period guides is that each volume presents an overall view of the arts and crafts of a given period and describes to the reader how each in turn came under the same influences. Mr. Edwards's belief is that such a series of books will help "to create in imagination a vanished world," a pleasant thought for those with a feeling for the past.

From Pottery to Jewellery

A number of the monographs give interesting and useful information to the reader who wants to obtain a general idea of the subjects dealt with in each volume. For instance those on pottery, porcelain and glass, by R. J. Charleston, portrait miniatures by Graham Reynolds, domestic metalwork, by G. Bernard Hughes and leather by John Waterer are particularly good in this respect. Another excellent monograph is the one on jewellery by Charles R. Beard, who is well known for his writings on armour and metalwork. He treats his subject in a most thorough manner, describing not only the various types of jewellery but also their social use. His description of a new-rich man of Henry VIII's reign reveals an unusual sidelight on Tudor society: "And to indicate his standing in this brave new world of *parvenus* such a man was compelled, in order to receive the deference due to his new-found condition, to load his person with gemmed gewgaws which he hoped would be accepted as indications of the merits of the man beneath."

The section on silver, by Hugh Honour, is a carefully written account which furnishes the reader with a general background for further study. One questionable remark is that the shape of some drinking-vessels was designed so that they could be clutched by greasy hands. The beaker of cylindrical shape, so common a drinking-vessel of the 16th century, does not support this conjecture.

Description of Numerous Houses

In the section on architecture and interior decoration, by Eric Mercer, the descriptions given of numerous houses are difficult to follow, for there are no illustrations of them in the text. This writer appears to have created a new school of architecture—the Sharington School—the master of which was Sir William Sharington. Much detail about the design of Sharington's buildings is given. We have only to turn to Mr. John Summerson, however, to find that Sharington employed a clever master-mason named John Chapman, who was not only one of the King's masons but, as Mr. Summerson suggests, carried out the carved work at Lacock, Sharington's house, and therefore the design is probably his and not that of his patron.

The monograph on furniture has been written by John Hunt, whose name one associates with the art of the mediæval metal-worker rather than the craft of the woodworker. He appears to have relied too much on other furniture books. For example, in writing about the London Turners' Company he takes information from *The English Chair* by M. Harris and Sons, 1937, in which occurs the mistake that the wares which were listed in the Ordinances of 1608—"Shovels, scoops, bushell trees, washing bowls, chairs, wheels, pails, trays, truggers wares, wooden measures"—are quoted as belonging to the earlier Ordinances of 1478, which is especially misleading because of the mention of chairs. Mr. Hunt repeats this mistake.

The illustrations in the volume are well reproduced and the format, title page and lay-out are pleasant and in good taste.

R. W. S.

QUALIFICATION IS VEXATION

A Golf Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN

"I SAY, young Copperfield," said Steerforth, "you're going it." I feel inclined to address my respected friend, Mr. Selway, in the same terms. The Championship Committee over which he so ably presides, are going it with a vengeance. Who will ever again complain of the Royal and Ancient being too conservative? First of all this revolutionary committee extended the principle of 36-hole matches to the last two rounds before the final in the Amateur Championship at Troon. Some people violently approved and thought this was the beginning of a new epoch in which the "good" players, that is to say the ones they thought good, would always win and all the "bad" players be beaten. The opposite party, who held that a golf match consisted of eighteen holes, as violently disapproved, and the more tranquil sat on the fence and said that the first year's experiment had proved nothing either way, as indeed it had not.

Next, the committee decided to make the best possible show for the spectators of the Open Championship by sending out the lowest scorers last on the last day, thus ensuring a grandstand finish. And now comes their third plunge. There are to be regional qualifying competitions for the Amateur Championship, to take place on various courses some weeks before the Championship, consisting of 36 holes of score play. There will be a certain limited number of exemptions; the total number of players to enter the Championship proper will be about 200; the present handicap limit of 2 will be raised and the entrance fee of £4 will be lowered.

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I remember some years ago writing an article in COUNTRY LIFE owning myself a convert to the principle of qualifying. I had always wished, if possible, to keep the Amateur Championship a purely match-play competition, but I had been converted, as I recall it, mainly by two considerations. First of all, the field for the Championship grew ever bigger and the day's play very nearly finished in the dark and was in grave danger of not finishing at all. Second, I had been more than ever aware of a number of players in the Championship who had no conceivable business to be there and clearly would not have been there if the handicapping committees at the clubs from which they entered had done their duty. At that time the question of qualifying competitions was imminent and then suddenly became less urgent. The fields dropped in size, probably because people had less time and less money. The English Union tried qualifying rounds in their championship at Deal in 1950 and were apparently not pleased with the experiment, since it was not repeated. And as far as I know we have heard very little about qualifying for some time. So this decision comes to me at any rate as something of a bolt from the blue.

Clearly, I must not go back on my conversion without evidence; I have at least an open mind and this will be an interesting experiment. It will certainly be satisfactory that those whose handicaps for one reason or another misrepresent their skill will now have to give their proofs in public or else retire. The state of things is not nearly so bad as it was when players, being properly handicapped at their own home clubs, habitually entered from some other club where they still had their old handicaps long since unjustified. But nothing can prevent the committees of small clubs either believing that their local demon is a good deal better than he is, or else sympathising with his desire to enter and so stretching their consciences. Under the new system there will no more be seen some of the "old, familiar faces" of those who, by hook or by crook, have still managed to enter for the championship, and that, though it may sound harsh, will be a good thing.

* * *

Then I think this plan will be a help to those who find that it takes too much time or costs too much money to enter for the Championship when it is far away from home. Now, if they fail to qualify, their modesty will have been justified; if they succeed that will, in itself, be a feather in their caps and they will feel justified in making the effort—and Championships to-day are not cheap larks—to find time and money. Those who believe that there are all sorts of mute inglorious champions, if they were only discovered, who could win the Walker Cup for us will no doubt say that the qualifying rounds will unearth for us this "hidden talent." One of their favourite epithets is "democratic," and here is a democratic system through which the unknown players will be able to fight their way into the number of the elect.

This I believe to be mainly nonsense. If some of these illustrious obscure do emerge, good luck to them and to the system, but the search for talent has been so thoroughly carried out all over the country by Mr. Oppenheimer and his colleagues that I doubt if any very striking discoveries will be made. If any are made it will probably be in the ranks of the artisan clubs, where are many good golfers, but they have been carefully combed already and the best are pretty well known.

It is very difficult to prophesy as to the number of the candidates who will offer themselves for qualifying. In the first year it will probably be large. A good many people will think that it might be rather fun, that they "may as well have a shot," and that it will be pleasant to talk for the rest of their lives of the day in which they played in the Championship. After a year or two of failure their enthusiasm may abate, but I suspect the fields will be big and I do not envy the authorities who have to choose the courses and allot the number of places to each qualifying centre. I do not know exactly on what principle they will do it. The number of clubs in a particular district is an obvious way, but even so, I think, to give an instance at random, that I would rather try to qualify in Merioneth than in Surrey. However, I have no desire to teach my grandmother, and I have no doubt that "the immense and brooding spirit" of Mr. Selway has already produced a design perfect in every detail.

* * *

I do not know how many places will go to the exempted, but with a field of 200 or so there must be a good many places left, and so there should not be any great fear of the elimination of someone capable of winning the Championship. When the English Union had its qualifying experiment at Deal one or two highly distinguished players were in the direst danger but played magnificent and courageous last rounds and saved their bacon. The nearest thing of the kind that I recall was in the Open at Hoylake in 1913, when, in an agony of apprehension, I watched J. H. Taylor hole the nastiest of putts to qualify, after which he proceeded to win the Championship by almost innumerable strokes.

Generally speaking, if a man cannot qualify as one of, let us say, 150 players he does not deserve a chance of winning the Championship. It is idle to deny that qualifying is a beastly job; it is no fun at all and I am very glad I never had to attempt anything of the sort, but I can bear it for other people with a reasonably light heart. Let us see how it works out and do not let us be too anxious to criticise the courses chosen or the number of places allotted to them. In short, let us give this fine, adventurous committee every chance.

A HEDGER'S SKILL

By DENYS WATKINS-PITCHFORD

IN March the countryside is tidier than at any other time of the year. Winter has taken almost six months to sweep away the rubbish of summer's end. It is now just before spring that the hedger is at work.

There can be few agricultural chores which show such great reward and are so fascinating to do. The great rampant hawthorn hedge along the lane has stood untouched for 20 years, perhaps longer. It is probably nearly two centuries since it was planted.

This cold March morning the thorny wall is furred with frost; its unshrivelled berries are still a deep tapestry red. Because of the mild winter they have gone ungathered by the woodpigeons and the clucking fieldfares.

* * *

Old Isaach's tricycle wheels rustle on the road, for there is frost there too. He propels himself with a jerky motion and with shoulders humped; you can tell his stance anywhere if you see him afar in the lanes. On his back is a sack. In the sack are his bill, a vacuum flask, three very thick sandwiches, cold fat bacon (not, alas, his own pig; those days have gone), a small raw onion and a hunk of red cheese. On the bar of his tricycle is his slasher, the long-handled knife, which we shall see at work in a moment, and a heart-shaped spade with a rather short handle.

By eight o'clock he is at work. First, he sets about the bushy side growth that overhangs the deep ditch. He swings the slasher high and slanting (always that slanting slice), for a direct blow will not make a clean cut however sharp the edge. Both sides of the hedge are served the same for a length of a couple of chains. The mass of thorns, long and whippy, are cast outwards away from the ditch on to the sward. Then old Isaach puts aside the slasher and stands back to survey his work.

His scarred hands are sheathed in thick rough leather gauntlet gloves, and a sack is tied around his waist like an apron. He wears goggles. When he was a young man he scorned them but one day a vicious branch whipped back and a two-inch stiletto, as sharp as a darning needle, drove into the corner of his eye and broke off short. Isaach tells (dispassionately) how he went straight off to the doctor, nearly fainting with the pain. The doctor drew it out with a pair of pliers. "An' 'e didn't give me nuthin' neither," said old Isaach. "I didn't 'arf 'oller!" Since then he has worn goggles. "Taught me a lesson, that did!"

Watching him at work one is fascinated. Having decided where he is to start, he advances on the upright bluish stems like a dentist on his patient. The upright mainmasts are as thick as a man's leg. With his bill he strikes slanting blows close to the ground, first downwards, one, two, three, then upwards, at an angle so as to make a clean cut.

Up goes his left hand and grasps the thorny main stem. He pulls. There is a creaking wheeze and the thorn comes over reluctantly, half falling, yet still held by a strap of bark and sappy wood only an inch thick. Within a few minutes he is well astride his task. The fallen branches are laid behind him slightly at an angle, the bushy tops falling on the field side.

* * *

Each yard of the way presents new problems. The thorns differ; some are sturdy, others are smaller, twisted. Any branches which protrude awkwardly on the ditch side are snicked off with one short jabbing slice of the bill. Ash trees, bird-sown, are met, growing straight up within the heart of the hedge. Some are cut right out at the butt, others are woven into the main body of the barricade. Elder is given short shrift and is cut to the ground.

Some butts are ivy-clad. Huge devilish briars bar the way in places. They have also been sown by birds, mostly by pigeons and fieldfares. They extend for yards, all entwined like snakes among the network of thorns overhead. They catch at his jacket and his gloves; they seem alive, as spiteful as angry wasps. They are mercilessly severed at ground level.

Old pigeons' nests are visible in the upper boughs of the hedge, and once there appears a thorny ball of sticks which shows where a magpie had its brood last summer. Blackbirds' and thrushes' nests, too, are revealed, full of red berries stored there by the hedge mice; these

spill out, rattling, as the branch tilts over.

Isaach loves this work and takes a pride in it. It may not be competition standard, but it is sound, it is thorough. When he has laid a couple of chains he stakes and binds it. The stakes he has cut himself as he goes along, straight pieces of thorn which he skilfully points with four diagonal blows of his bill. These are thrust right through the heart of the laid hedge, spitting it like spears; their tops protrude a foot above the tangle and are later cut neatly with one slice.

Then Isaach selects long whippy hawthorn branches from which he has trimmed the lateral twigs and taking three or four of these he weaves them skilfully in and out between the upright stakes. This gives a neat finish to the hedge; it keeps the wind from ruffling it. This wall of thorns is now impenetrable, even by the most courageous heifer.

* * *

But it is slow work. When at last he stops for a snack around mid-day, he has only laid a dozen yards. As he eats his thick sandwiches seated on the dry red shore of the ditch, a robin, hops fearlessly and cocks a black eye upwards. The sun shines warmly now; there is that indefinable faint fragrance of an earth which is awakening.

From somewhere in the distance comes the frail bleat of new-born lambs, and larks are singing over the plough.

Old Isaach will no doubt outlive the robin, but, perhaps, not the thorns. All is as it should be; it is the immutable order of things. He takes life as he finds it, and he finds it, on the whole, very pleasant. Spring is near; any evening now he must go down to his garden field (his allotment) and set his "'taty" crop.

So wears the pleasant day to its chill end. Old Isaach laboriously mounts his machine and pedals away into the distance. And in the ditch where new yellow chips lie, showing palely in the dimming dusk, ice is skinning over a small puddle. The air smells sharp with frost.

CORRESPONDENCE

COMMEMORATING MAGNA CARTA

From Sir Edward Maufe

SIR,—Thank you for your reference in an editorial note to the American tribute to Magna Carta at Runnymede (February 28). I am glad to be able to let you know that the monument itself is elemental in character, being a circular pillar of English granite with no mouldings of any description, having incised on it in severe bold letters "To Commemorate Magna Carta, Symbol of Freedom Under Law."

At one time it was proposed that this should be at the road side, much as a Roman milestone, but now it has been decided that it be sited just off the Medes between three existing oaks. In this position it obviously needs definition and emphasis. For these reasons and for the protection of the spectator, a shelter for it has been agreed, and this is to be built up of to-day's materials, i.e., stone piers to support that most functional invention—a roof made of reinforced concrete covered in copper, with a perspex eye at the centre to give better light on the monument. This shelter also gives an appropriate place for recording that this is a tribute from the American Bar Association, thus leaving the monument itself in its elemental simplicity.—EDWARD MAUFE, 139 *Old Church-street, Chelsea, S.W.3.*

[It is reassuring to hear that the monument is of the elemental character described by Sir Edward Maufe. In a first impression of the design, on which our comments were based, the shelter was, perhaps inevitably, more prominent than the circular pillar which it contains, and had the appearance, described in our note, of "a small round Neo-classical temple with a low dome supported on columns." Sir Edward's description, "stone piers to support . . . a roof made of reinforced concrete covered in copper, with a perspex eye," would seem to differ from that only verbally, and in the emphasis accorded to the pillar within. In the distant view that, owing to its site, the casual spectator will obtain of the monument, it still seems to us that the circular roofed shelter will be the most prominent component, while the "milestone" will be discovered only on close inspection. Since, we understand, the monument will not be approached by a path, there seems to be a danger that the shelter will be mistaken for the monument. Are the roof and supports, which gave us the misleading impression of a domed temple, essential for the monument's purpose?—ED.]

ADMIRAL BYNG'S EXECUTION

SIR,—Two hundred years ago to-day Admiral John Byng—about whom you published some correspondence earlier this year—was shot for what, at the worst, might be called an error of judgement. This caused Voltaire to make his well-known comment: "In England they shoot one admiral to encourage the others." The Admiral lies in his family vault at the church at Southill, in Bedfordshire. On the front of his burial place in the vault is the inscription shown in the accompanying photograph. This epitaph is generally supposed to have been composed by Dr. Samuel Johnson, who frequently visited Southill.—H. J. SMITH, *Westfield, Mears Ashby, Northamptonshire.*

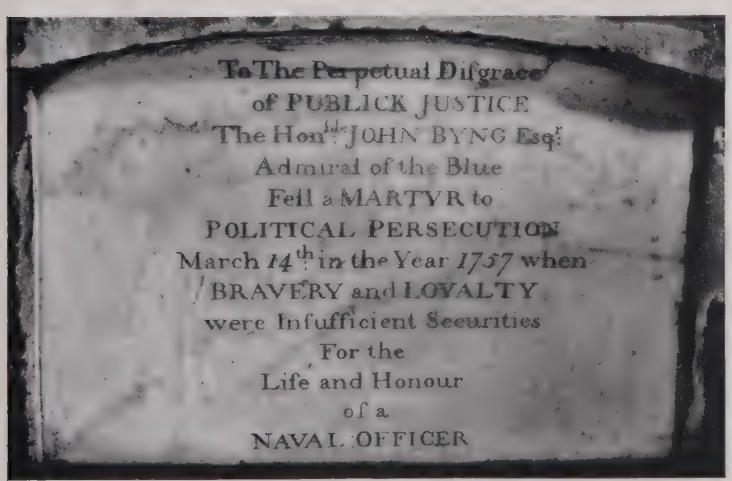
AN EQUESTRIAN PORTRAIT

From the Marquess of Anglesey

SIR,—I have what I presume is the original of the equestrian portrait which you identify as that of the first Marquess of Anglesey (*Collectors' Questions,* February 28). It is of enormous size, in bad condition and no longer hanging, having been removed from its frame. However, I have also a smaller version of it (30 ins. x 25 ins.), with a label on the back written, I should say, about 1850 or later, which reads: "The oil sketch for the large picture of the 1st Marquis —Strackling." I cannot find Strackling's name in Bryan's *Dictionary,* but it has struck me that the artist might be the Russian P. E. Stroëhling, who was painting portraits in this country between about 1803 and 1826. This is only a guess, however, and I do not know his work; the two paintings here are not signed.

Incidentally, the oil sketch here seems exactly the same as the painting that you illustrated, but the larger picture here has distant figures of Hussars, one of whom is a trumpeter, in the bottom left-hand corner, and there is a rugged rock in place of the building in the top right-hand corner.—ANGLESEY, *Plas Newydd, Llanfairpwll, Isle of Anglesey.*

[A portrait of "the Marquis of Anglesea," by P. E. Stroëhling, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1826.—ED.]



MEMORIAL TO ADMIRAL BYNG, WHO WAS SHOT 200 YEARS AGO TO-DAY, IN SOUTHILL CHURCH, BEDFORDSHIRE

See letter: Admiral Byng's Execution

SIGNS OF AN EARLY SPRING

SIR,—I think it may be worth recording, as further evidence of how forward things are owing to the mild weather, that on March 2, on my veranda a few miles south of London, I saw a bluebottle, a wasp, a honey bee and a tortoiseshell butterfly. The same day a drone-fly was seen a few miles away, and the next day a peacock, as well as a tortoiseshell, butterfly were seen near the Thames west of London.—C. D., *Beckenham, Kent.*

SWAMP CYPRESS ON TOP OF A HILL

From the Hon. Maynard Greville

SIR,—Modern trends in arboriculture lead us to revise our opinions considerably on where and how to grow trees. It always used to be assumed that if a tree grew in swampy conditions in its native home it had to be given the same conditions when it was transported somewhere else.

Dr. Syrach Larsen, in his recent book *Genetics in Silviculture,* translated by Professor Mark L. Anderson, of Edinburgh, points out that *Taxodium distichum,* the North American swamp cypress, does badly in swampy conditions and on river banks in Denmark owing to the coldness of the water, and reaches its best growth in drier places. I have long suspected that at least in the eastern counties of England the same conditions applied.

I enclose a photograph of a magnificent *Taxodium* 80 feet high at Bishop's Stortford, in Hertfordshire, which is not, as might be expected, down in the lush Stort valley, but right up on the western cliff above the town in the highest and driest place on the very top of Windhill.

Similarly in Essex at Herongate, near the Brentwood-Tilbury road, there is a fine young tree 81 ft. high right on the top of the valley ridge.—MAYNARD GREVILLE, *Little Canfield Hall, Dunmow, Essex.*

A SWAMP CYPRESS GROWING ON TOP OF A HILL AT BISHOP'S STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE

See letter: Swamp Cypress on Top of a Hill

FOLLIES AT FONTHILL

SIR,—Through the medium of your columns our attention has recently been focused on those charming adjuncts to the 18th-century scene—the prospect towers, the eye-catchers and the Gothic ruins, few of which, alas, now receive the kindly treatment they deserve. Perhaps the culminating masterpiece was the Abbey at Fonthill, Wiltshire, but Beckford also ornamented his park with a number of less conspicuous conceits.

In 1801 John Britton in *The Beauties of Wiltshire* wrote at some length on Beckford's alpine garden, which had by then attained "a most luxuriant growth," its many acres being managed "so as to present to the moving spectator a continual variety of scenes each marked with a different and generally some striking character." These last included the root-house, the Paliaro—a rustic rotunda thatched with straw with six rude unbarked firs as columns after the huts of the Calabrian shepherds—and, most agreeable surprise of all, the grotto, by Lane, of Oatlands and Pain's Hill. Root-house and Paliaro are no more; Fonthill and Pain's Hill grottoes are in decay; that at Oatlands was shamefully destroyed.

Britton's account, however, fails to mention one interesting feature of the Fonthill follies which has remained structurally intact to the present day. This is the hermit's cave. It takes the form of a high domed

SWALING ON EXMOOR: A FIRE MOVING UPWIND IN A COMBE NEAR DUNKERY BEACON

See letter: Burning the Moor

chamber, quarried out of the hillside. Walls and ceiling are beautifully covered with rock and flint and the main entrance way (there are three) retains its old iron gate. This retreat is now difficult to locate owing to encroaching undergrowth and is pervaded by an atmosphere of extreme malevolence. It would be interesting to know if Beckford's eccentricities included the employment of a professional hermit.—W. G. J. Lewis, *Flat 2, 8, Marlborough-parade, Hillingdon Heath, Middlesex.*

BURNING THE MOOR

Sir,—March is the favourite month for swaling, the deliberate burning of moors to kill off old growth and to promote new for sheep and other animals. The enclosed photograph, taken from one side of an Exmoor combe of a fire on the other side, illustrates a small point perhaps not appreciated by everyone. It is usual to burn upwind: here the smoke is being carried back over the burnt area, while the fire itself creeps forward. In this way quite a small track, even a ten-inch sheep track, will sometimes check the fire as it would certainly not do if a fire were worked downwind.

Yet, despite this precaution, there is far too much burning in moorland areas. The expanses burnt are too great, and much land is burnt far too often—more than once in seven years, which is probably best. In an age when there is a better understanding of soil conservation some authority should surely have power to restrict burning and to limit the widespread burning rights held by commoners. And the law about not burning after March 31 should also be enforced.—Westcountryman, *Somerset.*

REGENCY PATENT FURNITURE

Sir,—Mr. G. Bernard Hughes's reference to the Regency craze for ingenious patent furniture in his article *Day Gunby's Patent Furniture* (February 21) is a reminder that a series of "Fashionable Furniture" in *Ackermann's Repository* includes the examples of which I enclose photographs. In 1811 is illustrated the "metamorphic library chair," which, with the removal of the cushion and folding back of the chair back, becomes a useful set of steps. This is a reasonable piece of adaptation which is still in vogue, in metal tube furniture forming kitchen steps and stool.

In 1813, however, appeared a remarkable piece called "Pocock's Reclining Patent Chair," which foretells the gadgetry of American motor-cars. It was fulsomely described as "an elegant fashionable fauteuil chair upon Messrs. Pocock's patent reclining principle, to incline the back to any position, with double reclining footstools, which slide from under the chair to extend it when the back is reclined to the length of a couch. A reading desk is attached to the side, and contrived to swing round in front of the chair. The whole is designed with classical taste, in the present improved fashion of modern furniture by the ingenious inventors, Messrs. Pocock's of Southampton Street, Covent Garden." Presumably the lady of the lamp is also functional.—Margaret Jones (Mrs.), *Preston Wynne, Herefordshire.*

[The library chair illustrated in *Ackermann's Repository* was made by Morgan and Saunders, of Catherine-street, Strand, and a chair at Trinity College, Oxford, attributed to this firm, is illustrated in *The Dictionary of English Furniture*, vol. 2, p. 291.—Ed.]

19th-CENTURY PATENTS

Sir,—Mr. G. Bernard Hughes's interesting article on Gunby errs in stating that "only one patent for furniture was granted by the Patent Office during some twenty years around 1800." Actually, in the 1790s and in the early years of the 19th century hardly a year passed without a furniture patent being granted. Some of these are well known, such as those for extending tables taken out by Richard Gillow in 1800, by Richard Brown in 1805 and by George Remington in 1807. Gillow's and Remington's patents are described in Margaret's Jourdain's *Regency Furniture*, and she also refers to Benjamin Crosby's patent revolving bookshelves of 1808. Details of furniture patents can be found in *Abridgement of Specifications Relating to Furniture and Upholstery* 1620-1866, published in 1869, at the Patent Office Library.—Edward T. Joy, 4, *Tudor-way, Hillingdon, Middlesex.*

INGENIOUS MICE

Sir,—The landlord of a hotel in this neighbourhood recently gave me an account of what I consider to be extraordinary activities on the part of some mice which had paid a visit to his licensed premises the previous evening.

On the counter in the saloon bar he has what he describes as a "nut tree," on which bags of nuts are suspended at various heights from thin steel rods turned up at the ends. During the night mice had by some acrobatic performance removed a bag of nuts from the topmost rod and taken it along the floor for some twenty yards to a hole behind the radiator in the public bar. The bag was found nibbled through the bottom on the bar floor, and, as I could see, there were a few nuts left in the hole.

Can any of your readers explain how the mice were able to remove the bag from the "nut tree"? The neck of each bag is pierced to allow it to pass along the rods—no string is used—and the mice, after reaching the bag in question, would have to push it along the rod and over its upturned end. From the evidence I received the bag was not opened until it reached its destination.—B. W. Fitch-Jones, *Northiam, Rye, Sussex.*

RED AND WHITE LIGHTS ON THE ROAD

Sir,—I write to draw attention to an opportunity of making a useful improvement in the use of red and white lights on the roads, at a small cost.

The principle of white lights for advancing vehicles and red lights for receding ones has been extended, first to stationary vehicles, and more recently to other stationary obstacles, so that one might say that in general a white light shows something that a motorist must keep on his right and a red light something that he must keep on his left. This applies, for instance, to keep-left signs on traffic islands, to cat's-eyes and to the reflector posts which are now widely used on sharp or dangerous corners or to give warning of a ditch or steep descent at the side of a road.

On the other hand, the oil lanterns which are usually placed round temporary holes or obstructions at night are invariably red on both sides. A few days ago I came upon one of these obstructions on a dark country road. Mistaking it for a stationary car, I tried to pass it by moving out to the right—only to find that it was on the extreme right of the road and that I was on the grass verge. (It is to prevent similar mistakes that the *Highway Code* disfavours the parking of cars facing the wrong way.) It would be easy to replace the red glass at one side of these oil lanterns by plain glass, thereby avoiding all risk of misleading drivers.

Another way in which this useful principle could be extended would greatly increase the safety of pedestrians at night. In the *Highway Code* pedestrians are advised to walk on the right of the road, facing oncoming

"FASHIONABLE FURNITURE" ILLUSTRATED IN ACKERMANN'S *REPOSITORY* IN 1811 AND 1813. (*Left and middle*) "METAMORPHIC LIBRARY CHAIR" AND (*right*) "POCOCK'S RECLINING PATENT CHAIR"

See letter: Regency Patent Furniture

traffic, where there is no pavement. But if they do this at night with a torch they are liable to be mistaken by an oncoming driver for a cyclist on his off-side: he may thus misjudge the curvature of the road and attempt to keep the light on his right. Pedestrians walking on unlit roads without a pavement after dark should therefore be encouraged, or even compelled, to walk on the left-hand side of the road, and to hold in their right hands a torch with a white light in front and, if possible, a red light behind. A special torch could be designed and put on the market of cylindrical shape for easy carriage in the hand, with a bulb at each end and red glass at one end; but even people carrying an ordinary torch should walk on the left of the road. In this way one of the chief dangers of night driving could be removed.—NICHOLAS TEMPERLEY, *King's College, Cambridge.*

BACK TO FRONT

SIR,—I was much interested to read the letter in your issue of February 7 giving a suggested explanation for

AN INSCRIPTION IN REVERSE ON AN ARCH IN TRENT CHURCH, DORSET

See letter: Back to Front

carvings and inscriptions upside down on church fonts. I wonder if any reader can suggest a reason for the "mirror" writing in the church at Trent, in Dorset. This takes the form of a text inscribed in letters about 4 inches high round the underside of an archway. The words are painted for reading only by reflection, as in a mirror, and it is difficult to imagine how such a reflection could be obtained. A photograph showing part of the inscription is enclosed, but the complete text stretching over the whole semi-circle of the arch is as follows: "All flesh is grasse and the glory of it is as the floure of the feilde."—R. DIXON, 18, *Kingsholm-square, Gloucester.*

A BRASS CALENDAR

SIR,—I send you two photographs of a brass calendar dated 1761 in the hope that someone may be able to give some information about it. This calendar was found some years ago under the floor of a village butcher's shop. It is one and three-fifths of an inch across. The information includes the dates of the King's birthday and coronation. The maker's name is John Powell, of Birmingham.—M. W., *Hereford.*

OFFICERS OF THE BLUES AT REGENT'S PARK BARRACKS IN 1882

See letter: Identification Parade

IDENTIFICATION PARADE

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of officers of the Blues taken at Regent's Park Barracks in 1882. I am writing a biography of their colonel, Fred Burnaby, who is in the middle of the group. Can your readers identify the other officers?—MICHAEL ALEXANDER, 40, *Harrington-road, S.W.7.*

DOGS OF THE ARCTIC SNOWS

SIR,—Colin Wyatt's article *Dog of the Arctic Snows* (February 21) was pleasant reading, and therefore I hope that he will forgive me for disagreeing with him on his statement that huskies conform pretty much in size and build. This is by no means so. The Siberian husky, for example, is a light-weight animal compared with the great North American Malemute.

Perhaps the most important North American huskies are: the Malemute, the Eskimo dog, the Chore Indian dog, the Baffin Island dog, the Labrador husky, the Toganee and the heavily-made Mackenzie River dog. Their weight varies between (say) 70 lb. and 100 lb. or more.

As for the Greenland husky, the Thule breed of North-West Greenland has been developed into a powerful animal with longer legs than the North-East Greenland variety. There is also the Spitzbergen dog, which is a cross between the West Greenland husky and the Alsatian.

In size huskies vary from the famous little Alaskan bitch that weighs only 50 lb., but is a grand team-leader nevertheless, to the great North American varieties weighing up to 110 lb. In colour they range from the white Thule husky to the all-black, blue-eyed brute with whom I travelled in Yukon.

Incidentally, it is not only because the husky might attack children that it is always chained. If it were allowed to roam at will it would eat anything from footwear to whip thongs, and of course there would be frequent serious fights.—FRANK ILLINGWORTH, *Worcester Park, Surrey.*

A CLOCK BY MATTHEW JULER

SIR,—I read with interest the letter (*Collectors' Questions*, January 24) about a clock by John Juler, of North Walsham. I have an oak long-case clock which has been in my family for over 200 years. It has the name Matthew Juler, Norwich, above the dial. Is there a connection between the two Julers?—E. ALLISON ELVIN, 70, *Brabourne-rise, Beckenham, Kent.*

[No Matthew Juler has been recorded, but the unusual name and the fact that both men worked in Norfolk suggest that they were related.—ED.]

A FROG IN THE EAR

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Rupert Gunnis's enquiry about Sir John Poley's frog ear-rings (February 28), I suggest that they were worn by him as a charm against the evil eye. It is, or was, quite common for women and children in southern Italy to hang silver amulets in the form of a frog about their necks to counteract the *Jettatura.*

As support, on the other hand, for the local tradition making Sir John the hero of the nursery rhyme, "A frog he would a-wooing go," I should like to remind Mr. Gunnis of the Bohemian way of gaining a girl's love (*pace* Sir James Frazer in *The Golden Bough*, ii, 34) by means of a frog's bones; they seem to have been a potent and convenient charm in the hands of a philanderer.—MATTHEW STIRLING, 24, *Talbot-square, W.2.*

CROWS CARRYING OFF GOLF BALLS

SIR,—Apropos of your recent correspondence about crows carrying off golf balls, in the middle of the golf course at Dacca, capital of Eastern Bengal, there was a Hindu temple surrounded by a brick wall. Crows made a practice of swooping down from the trees inside the temple compound on any golf balls that fell within easy reach and carrying them back to the compound, from which they could not be retrieved.—H. R. WILKINSON, *Grange Cottage, Hadlow Down, Uckfield, Sussex.*

MEMBER OF THE SOUTH DORSET HUNT

SIR,—I read Capt. Lionel Dawson's recent article 150 *Years of the South Dorset Hunt* with great interest, especially as about a year ago I purchased in a local curiosity shop a portrait in oils about 12 ins. by 9 ins. of a gentleman wearing the hunting coat with white collar peculiar to the South Dorset Hunt. The portrait is well executed, of a fresh complexioned man in late middle life with brown eyes and of pleasant open expression and medium build. It is signed "E. Gustave Girandot, 1895." Can any reader help me to identify him?—SALLY E. ASPDEN (Mrs.), 27, *Twelve Acre, Minley, South Farnborough, Hampshire.*

OBVERSE AND REVERSE OF A BRASS CALENDAR OF 1761

See letter: A Brass Calendar

1790

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CHIMNEY-PIECES BY SCHEEMAKERS

By M. I. WEBB

IT has been appreciated only of recent years that when a smart marble chimney-piece was required for the decoration of the state rooms of the houses of the nobility and gentry the order went to one of the fashionable sculptors. This is particularly the case in 18th-century England, where Michael Rysbrack, Peter Scheemakers, Henry Cheere and Joseph Wilton, for instance, are known to have supplied their patrons with marble chimney-pieces. Roubiliac may have been an exception to this rule, possibly because his more Rococo art did not fit in with the Classical style which was the architectural fashion throughout most of the century.

A great deal of the work on chimney-pieces must have been done by the apprentices and assistants in the workshops of the best sculptors, and there were also what may be described as secondary sculptors, such as the elder John Deval (1701-74), who did a large trade in less ambitious fireplaces. In the big houses it was often customary to order the chimney-pieces for the principal rooms from one of the leading sculptors and those for the lesser rooms from a lesser and cheaper sculptor. At Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire, for instance, not only was Rysbrack employed to carve the two chimney-pieces for the principal saloon, but he also supplied the two large reliefs, *Sacrifice to Diana* and *Sacrifice to Apollo* to go over the fireplaces in the hall, though the frames for these reliefs and the fireplaces below them were supplied by Deval. Perhaps the most beautiful of Rysbrack's chimney-pieces are those at Clandon Park, in Surrey, and Houghton, in Norfolk. Chimney-pieces from Henry Cheere's workshop were supplied to the Earl of Lichfield for Ditchley, Oxfordshire, to Lord Folkestone for Longford Castle, Wiltshire, and to other clients. Later in the century Joseph Wilton supplied fireplaces for several houses designed by Sir William Chambers; one of his fireplaces is to be seen in the council room at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Peter Scheemakers does not seem to have done any chimney-pieces as large as Rysbrack's, like, for instance, those at Clandon Park, which, with their large "antique" reliefs framed in marble and surmounted by a pediment, reach the whole height of the wall. If money would not run to covering the chimney-breast with marble almost from floor to ceiling, or, indeed, if the client did not wish for that, the next most splendid chimney-piece was one surmounted by a marble portrait bust. One such was ordered from Scheemakers by the Governors of King Edward's School in Birmingham in 1747 (Fig. 1). The fireplace surround itself, which is not very elaborate, is in veined marble, and the total cost was £80. Scheemaker's letter, which is still at the school, gives an alternative price of £110 if the whole were to be made in statuary marble. It is possible that Scheemakers cut his price for the benefit of these particular clients. There was a great cult of the boy king, Edward VI, in the mid 18th century, and besides this bust Scheemakers did a bronze statue of him for St. Thomas's Hospital in London. A bust of Edward VI by Roubiliac is also at King Edward's School, Birmingham.

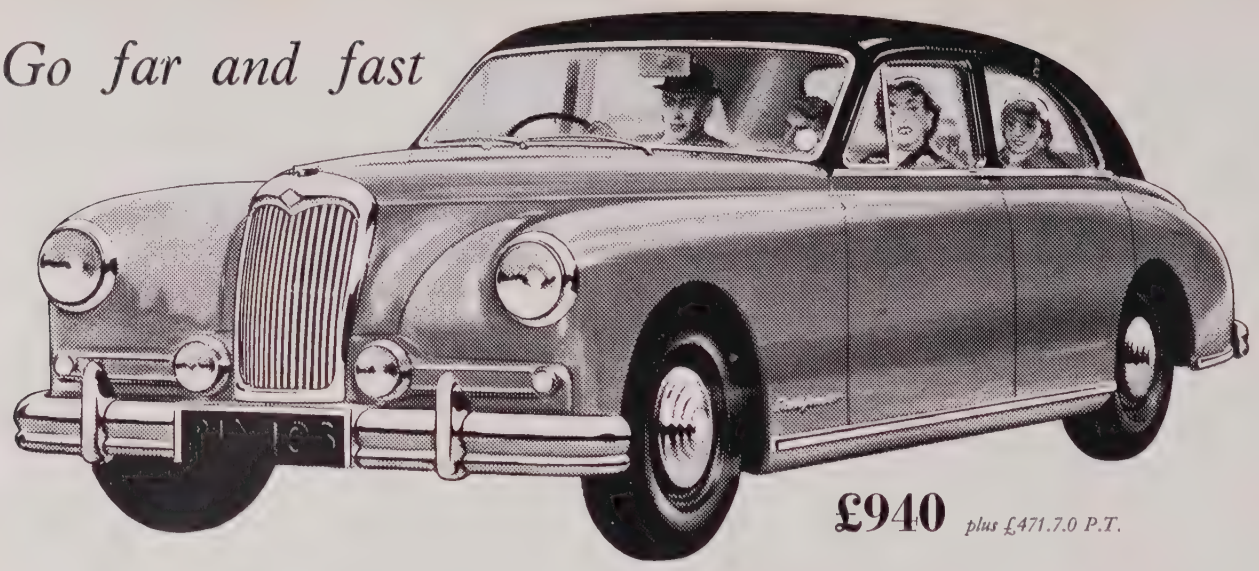
1.—CHIMNEY-PIECE WITH A BUST OF EDWARD VI BY PETER SCHEEMAKERS AT KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM. It was ordered by the Governors in 1747 and cost £80. (*Left*) 2.—THE CHIMNEY-PIECE DESIGNED BY CAPABILITY BROWN AND MADE BY SCHEEMAKERS FOR THE PICTURE GALLERY AT CORSHAM COURT, WILTSHIRE. The bust, also by Scheemakers, is of Sir Paul Methuen

A much grander and more expensive chimney-piece by Scheemakers is that in the picture gallery at Corsham Court in Wiltshire (Fig. 2). Paul Methuen, having inherited the collection of pictures made by his godfather and cousin, the statesman Sir Paul Methuen, employed Capability Brown to build a set of state rooms on to the 16th-century house at Corsham, and among the archives preserved there are account-books and bills showing payments to Peter Scheemakers. The original agreement, which did not include the bust, reads as follows:

"Articles of Agreement between Mr Skeemaker & Mr. Methuen April 22d 1763

"Mr. Skeemaker agrees to finish in the most masterly manner, A Chimney Piece for his Great Room at Corsham of the dimensions of Mr. Brown's Plan and according to a model made by the sd Mr Skeemaker and that the whole shall be highly polish'd and richly carved.

Go far and fast



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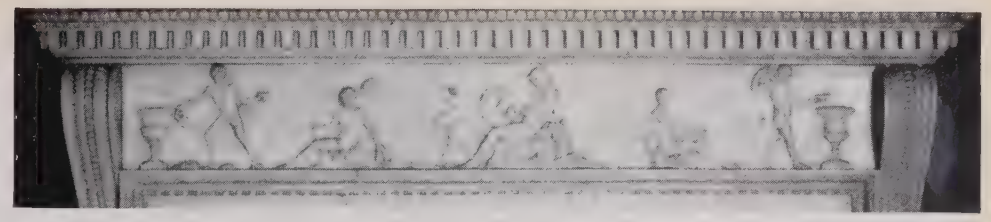
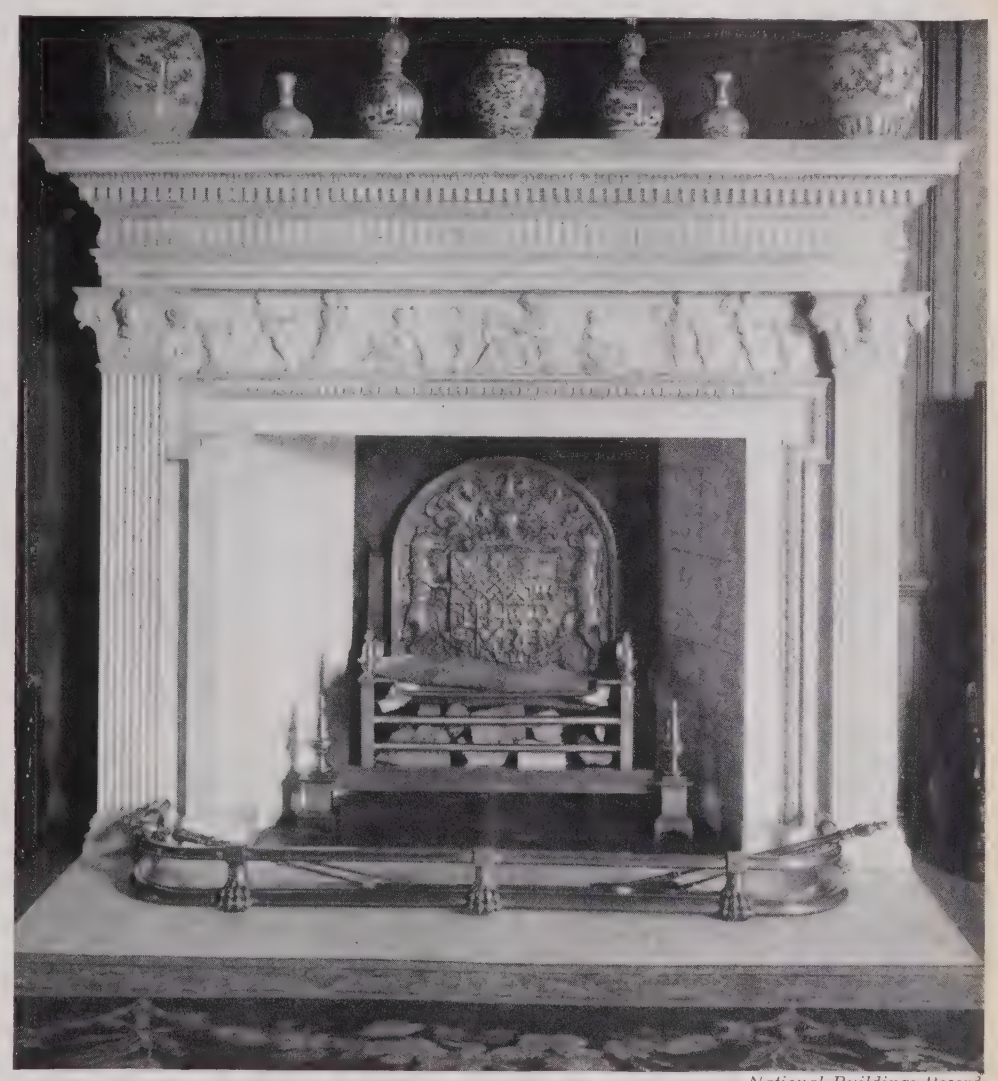
"P. Methuen
"P. Scheemakers."

Scheemakers was paid £100 immediately and £225 more in December, 1764. Two further payments of £100 each were made to him "for Busto and Chimney Piece" in 1765 and 1766. These payments relate to a chimney-piece in the adjoining room. The chimney-piece in the "Great Room" has a pair of draped female caryatids, which at this date were popular alternatives to columns or pilasters at the sides of fireplaces. Draped female figures are among the best of the sculptures which came from Scheemakers's workshop, and this pair are no exception. The way in which the upper mouldings are broken forward and canted above their heads is not, however, altogether happy, but that, presumably, is in accordance with the design supplied by Capability Brown. The bust in the middle is a posthumous portrait of Sir Paul Methuen (1672-1757), which is not mentioned in the agreement quoted above, though it was paid for in 1765-66.

As the accounts show that Scheemakers was paid "in full for the Great Room Chimney-piece" in 1764, the two subsequent payments which mention "Busto and Chimney piece" must relate to this bust of Sir Paul and to the marble chimney-piece in the adjoining Cabinet room (Fig. 3). Other accounts specify payments to other sculptors for chimney-pieces in other rooms. The main decorative feature of the chimney-piece in the Cabinet room is the relief in the frieze, which is a copy of part of the frieze of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, an engraving of which had been published in the first volume of *The Antiquities of Athens*, by Stuart and Revett, in 1762. The theme of this frieze is that of Bacchus and the Tyrrhenian pirates. The part selected for the chimney-piece at Corsham shows, to quote *The Antiquities of Athens*: "Bacchus with his Tyger . . . On either side of Bacchus sits a Faun . . . and by them stand two others, each with a cup in one hand and a Pitcher in the other. They have two large Vases by



3.—DETAIL OF THE FRIEZE OF THE CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE CABINET ROOM AT CORSHAM COURT. The design is derived from the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates at Athens



National Buildings Record

4.—CHIMNEY-PIECE DESIGNED BY ATHENIAN STUART IN THE PICTURE GALLERY AT ALTHORP, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE. Compare Fig. 3

5.—LORD HERBERT AGED TEN: A PORTRAIT MEDALLION BY WILLIAM HOARE AND PETER SCHEEMAKERS, DATED 1744. At Wilton House, Wiltshire

them and they seem to be very diligent in the Office of administring Wine to Bacchus and his Train."

At Althorp, Northamptonshire, is a similar frieze in a chimney-piece, except that two bacchantes have been inserted, one on each side between the fauns (Fig. 4); these bacchantes do not occur in the engraving of the Choragic Monument. The fireplace at Althorp was originally at Spencer House in London, where Stuart designed the interiors of the rooms on the *piano nobile*, in the early 1760s, at which time the interior decoration of Corsham was being carried out. Some of the fireplaces at Spencer House also came from Scheemakers's workshop, but in the 1760s Peter was over 70. He had a sculptor son and it is possible, indeed probable, that these Neo-classical reliefs were carved by the son, Thomas, though he was still only in his twenties. The Scheemakers, father and son, seem to have been the sculptors who usually worked with Athenian Stuart. There are two monuments in Westminster Abbey signed by J. Stuart and P. Scheemakers, one to Admiral Watson (died 1757), the other to Viscount Howe (died 1758), and there are several monuments of later date signed by Stuart and Thomas Scheemakers.

A considerable proportion of the work signed by Peter Scheemakers is rather heavy and dull, but there are also a number of admirable pieces of sculpture to which he put his name. He is reputed to have had a large workshop with many pupils and assistants, but until more research has been done on this subject it is impossible to say whether the best work was done by Peter himself or not. One of the most charming and unusual of 18th-century portraits is a medallion at Wilton House, Wiltshire, inscribed "Lord Herbert Ætat 10" and signed "W. Hoare del 1744. P. Scheemakers" (Fig. 5). William Hoare was the principal portrait painter in Bath from about 1740 to 1760, when the arrival of Gainsborough put him in the shade. William Hoare had a brother, Prince Hoare, who was a sculptor trained under Peter Scheemakers, according to Vertue, but Prince Hoare was probably in Italy when the Herbert medallion was being carved. He reappears alongside Scheemakers, however, at Corsham Court, where he was paid £242 for chimney-pieces in the library, bedroom and dressing-room in 1761-62.

I have to thank Lord Spencer, Lord Methuen, Lord Herbert and the Board of Governors of the King Edward's School, Birmingham, for information and permission to reproduce the respective photographs.

THE MOVABLE GLASSHOUSE

By W. F. BEWLEY

GLASSHOUSES or greenhouses have always been one of the most expensive parts of garden equipment, and it is not surprising that gardeners have tried to find substitutes to save capital expenditure. During the last war, when the breaking of glass by high explosives was not uncommon, many attempts were made to use what were called glass-substitute materials. Many gardeners will remember that a wide range of materials were offered for this purpose. Naturally the clear sheet materials were the first to be tried. Then followed the transparent sheeting reinforced with fine rust-proof wire mesh, and even transparent film over muslin-like fabric. Gardeners tried them out in garden frames, in the manner of cloches and as a means for repairing broken glass in the roofs of their greenhouses. They served a temporary purpose, but only one or two stood the test of time. Later came stronger and thicker sheets of transparent plastic material, much superior to the original types, but more expensive. To-day there are many kinds of plastic sheeting from which the gardener can make a selection.

I carried out a number of experiments during several years with a cheap form of muslin. At the time I was very impressed with its possibilities, provided it was used only for the sides of the enclosure, and that a transparent and water-tight plastic was used for the roof. I grew some excellent crops of tomatoes, the fruit from which compared very favourably with that from a heated glasshouse during August, September and October.

In the construction of these muslin houses we used rough timber at first, to form a skeleton about 12 ft. wide, 50 ft. long, and just high enough for the workers to stand up erect inside. This meant that the eaves were about 6 ft. 6 ins. and the ridge about a foot higher from the ground. The roof was covered neatly with the best plastic we could get at the time, and after allowing for a door at each end, we fixed the muslin tightly in position to form the sides. To provide for ventilation the muslin sides and ends were raised about 4 ins. off the ground, and finished about 4 ins. below the eaves. In this way air could enter the structure just above the ground, and leave it just below the eaves.

We planted strong tomato plants, with the first flower truss showing the yellow colour of the petals, during the last three days of May, which meant waiting until all risk of a May frost had gone. This proved to be an inexpensive method of making a cosy home for tomatoes during the summer. Tomatoes don't like being blown about; they always do better in a sheltered position. The muslin shelter provides a suitable still atmosphere, and if the plants are damped overhead on sunny days, a moist Turkish bath sort of environment is created, in which the fruits set without difficulty.

MUSLIN ENCLOSURE FOR GROWING TOMATOES. Muslin is a cheap substitute for glass, and tomatoes grow well behind it

Most of us who have large gardens to-day find that they are very expensive luxuries, and if we can earn an honest penny from our produce it enables us to keep the garden in altogether better shape. This muslin structure may be just what some readers are seeking, and in any case it is worth a trial on a small scale. If difficulty arises in holding the muslin side in position, it is a good plan to hem along each side of the muslin roll. If a flexible wire is threaded through the tunnel formed by the hem the job of fixing becomes much easier.

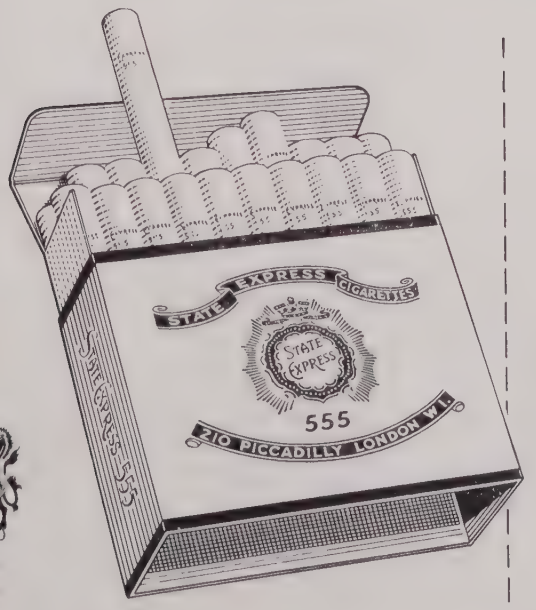
If, of course, you decide to construct a house of plastic sheeting the same kind of structure will suffice, and you will probably find that you can plant up the plastic house sooner than the muslin structure. More expensive structures can be made of metal tubing; they are naturally more lasting.

In some parts of England, gardeners who determined to branch out into the important glasshouse industry made their start with what are often called Dutch light houses. In other words they constructed a metal skeleton of tubular or perhaps T-irons, suitably designed to hold Dutch lights in position. Usually a line of lights formed the side. Each light is 59 ins. long and 31¾ ins. wide, outside measurements. The iron bar holding the bottoms of these lights was about 18 ins. above the ground, and this space was filled in with asbestos sheets or even hessian secured at the top and held in position at the bottom by throwing the soil over it. The roofs were also made of Dutch lights, usually one on either side of the low ridge, but sometimes two. The ends of these houses were also built up of lights around a door.

It will be realised that these houses were easily built up and taken down again when necessary. The pioneer growers made use of this fact by moving the lights over three crops each year. Usually they designed a block of five or six houses side by side, so that a good wide area of land was available for each crop. Three sets of the metal supporting framework were erected, with the idea that the lights could be moved along as the crops could spare them. Thus during the winter the lights would be over bulb-flowering crops. When these were finished the lights would be taken down and moved over to cover tomatoes until frost was imminent. Then the lights would be moved over to cover chrysanthemums, which had been growing in the land during the summer and now wanted protection from the frost. Some of these blocks were unheated, some were heated with a simple hot water boiler. These growers found that by using the lights in this way they made the most of their capital. Taking down the lights,

MOVABLE GLASSHOUSE UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN A SUSSEX MARKET GARDEN. When one lot of plants has grown up under it, it can be rolled along to shelter another

"I never miss" said the Major.



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moving and re-erecting them, naturally involved a good deal of work. Obviously, it would be much easier from the point of view of labour if the houses could be moved intact by mechanical means.

The first movable houses were thought about, and actually built, in the first year or two of the present century. Those who built the prototypes so many years ago continued to take advantage of them, but the idea itself did not spread. Indeed, it was not until after the second World War that any general interest was shown in movable houses. Obviously, this is due to very much changed circumstances in the industry. The cost of building new greenhouses to-day has increased beyond all anticipation, and naturally we have to make the most of any capital we may use. Hence the idea of moving the actual greenhouse itself so as to bring it over crops as they need protection is a fascinating one.

Although the idea of using movable greenhouses is obviously one for the commercial grower, I can see considerable use for it in a garden, especially where the owner is trying to make it self-supporting. Perhaps, therefore, we might consider how best a house can be adapted for movement. In the first instance iron wheels were fitted under the walls of the superstructure and arranged to run on rails in much the same way as a railway truck. After many experiments this was abandoned. Instead of wheels moving on rails, the alternative method of rails moving on wheels was tried. This is the principle adopted in what seems to be the most successful designs.

So it seems that in constructing a movable greenhouse the thing to do is to fix a strong iron rail under each side wall and to see that the rails are absolutely parallel. These rails will ride on wheels of suitable diameter and width; the wheels will be mounted in strong concrete dollies, set out in lines, three times the length of the house. These dollies and the wheels mounted in the tops of them must naturally be in perfect alignment, otherwise difficulties will arise during the moving of the house. A small house would be easy to move by man power, but in commerce, where large blocks of houses are moved, a powerful winch is required.

Those who go in for movable houses have first to decide what they are going to do about the heating—unless, of course, the house is to be cold. A small boiler can be moved with the house; a more powerful type can be fixed in a permanent position, with permanent lagged mains to which the heating pipes in the house will be connected and disconnected at will.

Most gardeners will agree, I hope, that a perfect movable greenhouse would make life easier. There is often a great rush to get one crop out, just because the one that is to follow is ready for planting and will spoil if the job is not done almost at once. With a movable greenhouse, all one does is to move the house off the crop on to the next piece of vacant land, already prepared in advance, and get on with the planting. In the case of chrysanthemums the plants can be planted out in the open months before they need covering with glass, and be got ready gradually. Then when frost seems possible, the greenhouse, covering tomatoes or some other summer crop, is merely moved over the chrysanthemums and all is well.

Obviously, to create a movable greenhouse with as perfect temperature control at high temperatures as one can get in a static house would be both difficult and costly. That we must appreciate, but for crops requiring temperatures of 40 to 60 degrees or for cold houses they are going to prove most useful. There is the added benefit of being able to expose the soil to rain, wind and frost if necessary, and so maintain its fertility without any difficulty.

Modern glasshouse design, in which light alloys are used, makes it much easier to construct movable houses to-day than in the old days with heavier superstructures. Indeed, the simple assembly of standardised parts by unskilled workers is by no means a dream.

THE MAD TIGER OF SAIKHOAGHAT

By WALTER ROCHE KEMP

TIGERS are creatures of habit and routine. They have their boundaries within which they hunt, and they will not allow other tigers to enter their domain. Each one has its own particular method of obtaining its food one may hunt wild animals, another domesticated cattle only—but in principle they are the same; their movements and reactions are predictable. Any eccentricity on the part of an animal is rare because there are so few reasons for it, so that the behaviour of a tiger of Saikhoaghat, in North-east India, was of special interest.

I had just returned to my bungalow after an early morning shoot and was met with the news that a tiger had mauled several people and that they were lying in the Saikhoaghat hospital. I tried to get fuller details but was unable to do so. On thinking the matter over I decided it was strange that a tiger should have attacked so many people at one time; in my many years' experience I had not heard of such behaviour. Obviously this was no ordinary tiger.

* * *

I had a hasty breakfast, got into my car and drove into Saikhoaghat, a distance of about four miles. As I drove up to the so-called hospital, really only a dispensary, I saw a bullock cart drawn up on the side of the road. In it was a fine tiger lying dead, his massive head protruding out of the front. I took a cursory glance at the tiger and went on to the hospital, where I saw bodies lying about in the verandah, some with terrible wounds which appeared to be claw and tooth marks. The hospital staff were very short-handed, but were doing their best to dress the patients' wounds as quickly as possible. On one of the beds—there were only two in the hospital—I saw a man lying with a large gash across his scalp; his arm had been fractured above the elbow, and I could see large punctures in the flesh where the tiger had held him in its jaws. The poor man was in great pain, and appeared dazed with fright. Beside him on the same bed was his son aged about seven with a fractured thigh. Blood was oozing from tooth marks in the flesh.

After the injured had been given first aid, I advised the doctor to give all the patients and those treating them anti-rabic treatment, as I considered that the tiger was suffering from rabies, and was not just an ordinary man-eater. In all my considerable experience of tigers I had never heard of, or read of, one with rabies, but only rabies could account for this particular beast. The doctor, I am glad to say, took the advice; he also sent the brain of the tiger to the Pasteur Institute in Shillong for examination.

Having done all I could to help, I tried to get more details of what had happened from some of the patients. The man with the fractured arm gave me his story. It appeared that his household consisted of himself, his wife and two sons, the elder of whom was the boy in hospital with a fractured thigh. The whole family were asleep in their little grass hut when he heard something scratching at the side of the hut. He got up to see what it was, and was promptly attacked by some animal and knocked down. In the darkness he could not make out what had attacked him, and lay rolling on the ground trying to get away. His wife, hearing the noise, rushed to his assistance. The tiger left the man and attacked the wife, killing her in a very short time. He then saw the boy and went for him. The other small boy picked up an empty sack, crawled inside and so escaped unscathed. Ignoring this sack, the tiger quietly walked out of the house. By then the man had realised what it was that had attacked him, and went outside to give warning. The whole village was now awake and he could hear screams and cries coming from inside other houses. The tiger just went from one house to another, attacking everything he saw and then leaving his victims.

At last a local sportsman came armed with a shotgun, climbed on to the roof of a house, made a hole in it and fired at the tiger, first with a bullet and then with slugs. The tiger fell dead after the first shot.

Early next morning the injured were taken to hospital. They had most terrible wounds deep slashes across their heads and bodies made by the claws of the beast and nasty puncture wounds made by its teeth.

This was the story. I learnt later that the tiger had traversed at least 12 miles, terrorised the inhabitants of some five or six villages, had attacked in all 14 people, five head of cattle and a dog. Two of the people and the dog were killed outright. Two other people died in hospital.

I could do no more to help the hospital staff, so thought I would examine the tiger. He was a large male about 9 ft. 4 ins. in length, in fine condition with a good coat. There were no old scars on him and no old wounds; the limbs appeared to be normal and his jaws and teeth intact.

I found by poking a stick into the bullet wounds that the first shot had hit him between the eyes and had entered his brain. I found the slugs lying against the skull just under the skin; they would have given the tiger only a headache. The sportsman was indeed lucky to have fired the bullet first.

After I had finished my examination I discovered that my arms were covered in small cattle ticks; I had noticed that the tiger was smothered in them. I had quite a job getting rid of them.

Finding the tiger in perfect condition in every way convinced me that there was no natural cause for him to have behaved as he had done—just attacking and leaving his victims without attempting to have a meal. I was certain then that he was suffering from rabies.

In due course a report came back from the Pasteur Institute confirming without doubt that the tiger had rabies. The Director was known to me and I had already written and told him about the tiger. It appears that only one other such case had been reported, and that was in 1943 from the district of Nowgong, in Assam. As far as is known these two cases are the only ones reported of tigers definitely suffering from rabies.

* * *

We shall never know how this tiger got this disease. I can only give my theory. For any animal to get rabies it must come in direct contact with another rabid animal. The virus is usually conveyed through the saliva and generally through a bite or lick. In the advanced stages of rabies paralysis sets in before death takes place. If an animal, such as a cow or bullock, has been bitten by a mad jackal or dog it will develop rabies. As paralysis advances the animal finds it cannot keep up with the other cattle, so it lags behind; it is then easy prey for a tiger. In killing and feeding off the animal the tiger gets its mucous membrane infected, and then rabies sets in.

Perhaps some reader can give a better theory. In any case, it will remain one of those problems that we cannot solve.

THE DEAD BIRD

So frail, so frail a form to fly so high.
I hold your yielding softness in my hand
That but a moment since from heaven scanned
Us heavy earthbound creatures crawling by.
Still warm against my helpless hand you lie,
Intrepid heart: you did not understand
The clear deceptive window-panes that spanned
The space through which you thought to reach the sky.

And I, frail spirit in frail form, aspire
To higher heavens than you ever had sought:
To skies beyond your uttermost desire
I wing my way on powerful-pinioned thought.
Has God's House windows of invisible fire?
And if I strike them am I freed, or caught?

DOROTHEA SPEARS

A CAUSERIE ON BRIDGE

THE PROBLEM OF THE PROBLEM

By M. HARRISON-GRAY

TRIBUTE is due to the great minds who set bridge competitions in magazines and newspapers, with a word of encouragement to solvers and a reproof for the cynics who allege that a special technique is needed to obtain a good score.

The official answers are more easily understood by anyone who has been present at the birth of a typical bridge problem. Consider an episode from a recent match :

West	*East*
♠ K Q	♠ A 10 7 3 2
♡ K Q 10 3	♡ A J
◇ 6 5	◇ A 9 3
♣ A K Q 6 3	♣ J 10 8

Dealer, West. East-West vulnerable.

Both teams favoured the Culbertson Four No-Trumps convention. In Room 1, after One Club—One Spade; Two Hearts, East bid Four No-Trumps without further ado. West could tell that his partner held three Aces, and the reply of Five No-Trumps revealed the fourth Ace and the Kings of all suits bid by the partnership. East then bid Six Clubs, on the principle that West's reverse bid of Two Hearts was equivalent to a rebid of Three Clubs; as West could not visualise a possible loser after such bidding, he promptly converted to a successful grand slam.

In Room 2 the bidding went thus: One Club—One Spade; Two Hearts—Three Diamonds; Three Spades—Four No-Trumps; Six Clubs Six Spades. After winning the Diamond lead East played off the King-Queen of Spades, came back with the Ace of Hearts, and played the Ace of Spades, North showing out. The Knave of Hearts was overtaken with the Queen and a Diamond discarded on the King, but South ruffed and cashed a Diamond to put the small slam one down.

A turnover of 2240 on one hand (11 match points) naturally called for an inquest. East's team-mates could not agree that his fourth-suit bid of Three Diamonds was "obligatory"; West could not identify the qualifications for his subsequent bid of Four No-Trumps, which might have consisted of the Ace of Spades and Ace-King of Diamonds, so he was reduced to the uninformative book response of Six Clubs.

Since East was an authority, he was in no position to give way. A grand slam that depended on a perfect fit, he insisted, could not be bid with real assurance, and never would he stoop to the crude hit-or-miss methods which succeeded in Room 1. He might have left West in Six Clubs, he conceded, although his bid of Six Spades was an intelligent match points effort that was defeated only by a perverse distribution. In spite of the result, said East, no player worthy of the name would consider any other rebid but a scientific Three Diamonds.

When an unlucky expert is lucky enough to conduct a bridge column, he is fully entitled to let off steam at the expense of his detractors. So you need not be surprised if one day you come across the following problem:

The bidding proceeds: West, One Club; East, One Spade; West, Two Hearts. You, East, hold:

♠ A 10 7 3 2 ♡ A J ◇ A 9 3 ♣ J 10 8

What call do you make?

If you are a keen psychologist who is out to win a book token, you will hit on the right answer—"Three Diamonds."

It is a mistake, I have found, to set problems which are answered by a panel of experts. I once included a hand that distressed me at the table, for a good partner failed to translate a series of beautiful inferences; he will have to admit he was wrong, I thought, when he studies the panel's answers. Sad to relate, he still thinks he was right, the alleged experts having shown the same degree of obtuseness, supported by a blistering editorial footnote.

A far more sensible plan is to insist that the competition editor's decision is final and that no correspondence can be entered into with regard to questions and answers. At this point I would make a personal plea. The solver, like the competition editor, is entitled to let off steam; but will he please refrain from appealing to *me* for justice in this fashion: "I wrote to So-and-So, pointing out that his award for Problem No. 4 was nonsensical. No reply to date. I should like to know what *you* think." This puts me in an embarrassing position, especially when I happen to like old So-and-So.

Some problems are admittedly better than others. The other day a real beauty caught my eye. Vulnerability not stated; you play Blackwood.

You, South, hold:

♠ J 9 4 3 ♡ A Q 8 6 ◇ 5 4 3 ♣ Q 8

The bidding proceeds:

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
1 Spade	Double	No bid	2 Hearts
3 Diamonds	4 No-Trumps	No bid	5 Diamonds
No bid	5 Hearts	5 Spades	?

What do you say?

I call this a perfect problem, because it goes into the very fundamentals of bidding. Ask yourself the old questions—"Is my hand better than it might be? Is my stuff in the right place? What is partner trying to convey?"—and you cannot fail to see daylight.

This is no time to argue that North is in full charge; he knows you have one Ace, but his bid of Five Hearts tells you to pack up. Let us think a moment before writing off a slam. For all partner knew, your hand could be something like this :

♠ J 9 3 ♡ 9 8 6 3 2 ◇ 5 3 ♣ 8 7 4

How, then, can he force you up to Five Hearts with only one Ace in his hand? Or again, how on earth can he hope to find you with *two* Aces on the bidding?

Your first impulse, and a commendable one, is to shoot Six Hearts for the simple reason that you are about ten times as good as you need be for a minimum response to a double. Furthermore, since North's main length seems to be in Hearts and Clubs, you hold no fewer than three key cards; on the bidding the Ace-Queen of Hearts and Queen of Clubs are the virtual equivalent of three Aces. Finally, what is he trying to convey with his bids of Four No-Trumps and Five Hearts? Simply this: "You know that I must have two first-round controls and super Heart support. I know that you have only one Ace, but I am asking you to bid Six if it happens to be *the right Ace*." In other words, with your actual hand you bid the slam in your sleep, but you must double East's bid of Five Spades if you hold the redundant Ace of that suit, North being marked with a void.

If this is not clear, you have only to picture the type of hand that would justify North's bidding. He could scarcely use Blackwood unless he felt that you were dead safe for eleven tricks, even allowing for the fact that you might have little or nothing, let alone the Ace of Hearts. Can his hand possibly be worse than the following?

♠ ... ♡ K J 10 7 3 ◇ K Q 8 ♣ A K J 9 2

A month later I scanned the official answers, wondering whether the competition editor could improve on my analysis. He could and he did. I quote:

"Double (10 points). Six Hearts (4 points).

"There are almost surely two Aces missing, so to bid Six is clearly foolish except as a sacrifice. It is just possible that Five Spades can be made, however, so Six Hearts gets a few marks."

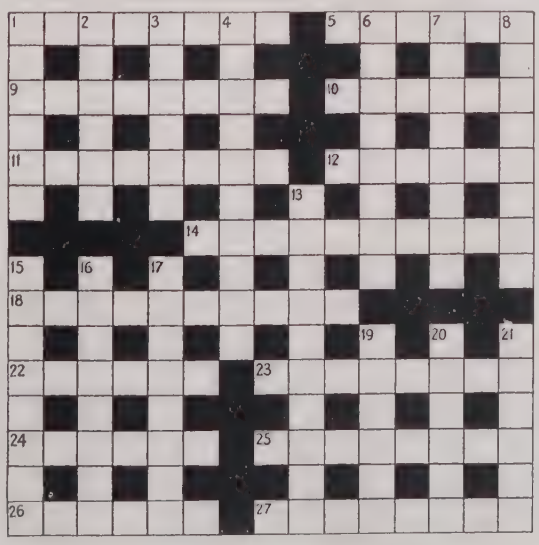
And the following, we are told, is the kind of North hand that we should visualise:

♠ 2 ♡ K J 10 7 3 ◇ K 8 ♣ A K J 9 2

If you feel that his bid of Four No-Trumps was a little bold with about five possible losers staring him in the face, you are as innocent as I was. A good problem is designed to make you think, and a good solver should look beyond the obvious and allow for a psychic Blackwood, North's object being to deter the enemy from bidding (and making) Five Spades. But no more letters, please, on the subject.

CROSSWORD No. 1414

COUNTRY LIFE books to the value of 3 guineas will be awarded for the first correct solution opened. Solutions (in a closed envelope) must reach "Crossword No. 1414, COUNTRY LIFE, 2-10, Tavistock-street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2," not later than ***the first post on the morning of Wednesday, March 20, 1957.***



Name.....

(MR., MRS., ETC.)

Address.....

.....

SOLUTION TO No. 1413. *The winner of this Crossword, the clues of which appeared in the issue of March 7, will be announced next week.*

ACROSS.—1, Capability; 6, Asti; 9, Challenges; 10, Rich; 12, Symbol; 13, Rifle; 16, Sparrow; 18, Stadium; 19, Ireland; 21, Chasten; 22, Inset; 23, Rummer; 27, Trug; 28, Stylograph; 29, Apex; 30, Hypodermic. DOWN.—1, Coco; 2, Plat; 3, Bully; 4, Long bow; 5, Trellis; 7, Skinflints; 8, Ichneumons; 11, Armada; 14, Aspidistra; 15, Caper sauce; 17, Roasts; 20, Dorothy; 21, Camillo; 24, Eagre, 25, Harm; 26, Chic.

ACROSS

1. It looks paradoxically as if the tortoise might win in this! (8)
5. "Out of the little —— I burst" —*Browning* (6)
9. The surgeon's pride? (8)
10. Tin can full of acid (6)
11. Is the herdsman too precise? (8)
12. The more beautiful the more satisfactory (6)
14. Pilgrim who should see a cardiac specialist (10)
18. The weathercock might seem in a state of suspense with these birds about (10)
22. Change a gun to a confection (6)
23. A fresh sword needed here (5, 3)
24. "I —— round my cresses"—*Tennyson* (6)
25. Make a joke with it and I've finished (8)
26. Horse-play America gets from the Adriatic (6)
27. Chief of the Trichologists' Journal, is she? (8)

DOWN

1. Oil for a twin (6)
2. Mansard, possibly, returning thanks (6)
3. A hundred to one in pain in walking (6)
4. Spanish rib? Excellent here! (5, 5)
6. Rather superior to a pain in the neck (8)
7. Scare Nap (anagr.) (8)
8. Price for the product of Honiton? (8)
13. Kipling's epithet for Sussex (4, 6)
15. Gulls are his favourite birds (8)
16. Confused nude gets a summons to the telephone (8)
17. The people one might meet at a gathering at Wool (8)
19. Verb in the shorter dictionary (6)
20. "To all you ladies now at land We men at sea ——"—*Charles Sackville* (6)
21. Drives that should keep themselves clean (6)

NOTE. This Competition does not apply to the United States.

The winner of Crossword No. 1412 is

Mr. Guy Lawrence,

Little Easton Manor,

Dunmow, Essex.

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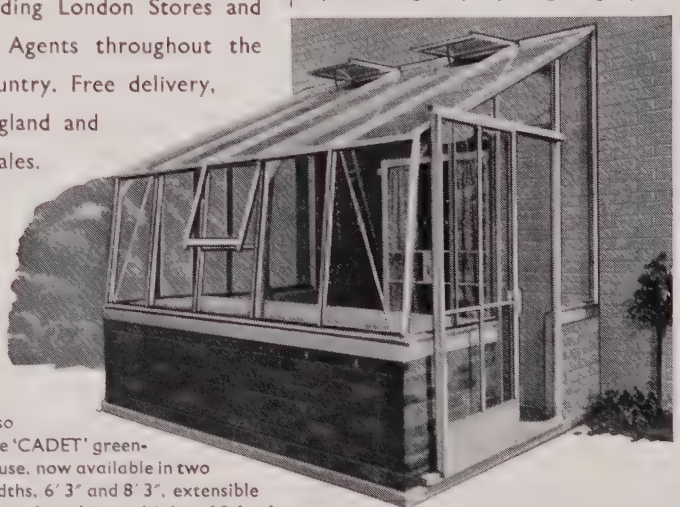

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FARMING NOTES

CONSUMERS' CHANGED TASTE IN MEAT

ADDRESSING the Farmers' Club last week Mr. F. W. Salisbury gave an up-to-date account of the changes in consumers' tastes. He spoke with knowledge of what housewives want when they go to the shops of his firm, Messrs. J. Sainsbury, and he did not claim that they always prefer what is really best. So much has been written and said to warn people of the disadvantages—both aesthetic and functional—of obesity that the pendulum has swung too far in favour of unfinished meat. Scientific experiments have shown that the palatability in terms of texture, flavour and juiciness increases with the fat content up to an optimum corresponding to 38 per cent. of fatty tissue in the edible meat. Beyond this degree of fatness palatibility decreases. This proportion of fat approximates to that found in a carcass of beef with a dressing-out percentage of 60 in present feeding conditions. What the public is currently demanding, and what in consequence most attracts the butcher, is a carcass with a killing-out percentage nearer 56. Many consumers thus are not obtaining the meat which they would find to be of the best flavour. Mr. Salisbury further pointed out that tenderness is a common property in imported meat, and one feels that the three weeks or so spent by chilled beef on its way to this country has a tenderising effect. There is little doubt that much home-killed beef is sold too fresh. This is a marketing problem that the Fat-stock Marketing Corporation can usefully tackle by having cool stores in which home-killed beef can be hung properly.

Competing Poultry

THE Americans eat six times as much poultry meat as we do. In the United States poultry has for long been much cheaper in relation to carcass meat and is probably eaten where the British consumer would take lamb. Mr. Salisbury made this point to the Farmers' Club, saying that the broiler industry here with its rapidly accelerating production and falling costs is already staking a bigger claim on consumers' choice of meat. Incidentally, a good many people object to the word broiler used to describe a tender young chicken. It is confused with boiler, the term for an old hen that is past the age for roasting. Whatever the bird is called, it will, in greatly increased quantity, have an impact on the demand for other meat.

Fair Shares

I LEARNED more about the economics of egg marketing when I attended the annual general meeting of members of the local co-operative egg packing station. The board proposed to pay a graduated scale of bonus to members according to the number of boxes of eggs each consigned to the station during the months of July to December when eggs are really wanted. The recommendation was a bonus of 4d. a dozen to members sending an average of less than 1 box (30 dozen) weekly; 5d. a dozen for an average between 1 and 10 boxes; 6d. a dozen for 10 to 20 boxes; and 7d. a dozen for over 20 boxes. This big differential was criticised by some of the members at the meeting who felt that in a co-operative concern all should be treated alike and indeed that the aim of co-operation should be to help the small man, who probably needs a bonus more than the big man who can put his costs. This philosophy is not, however, good business.

Size Scores

THE big producer is the profit-maker for any egg packing station, and he can command a premium from private firms, if not co-operative societies, because of the size of his consignment. The lorry can pick up a good load when it calls at his farm; his eggs go over the grading machine in one lot without the machine having to be stopped frequently and there is only one book-keeping record and one cheque. The really big producer's eggs are worth several pence more a dozen than the small man's eggs. Indeed, if the big men sent their eggs elsewhere the profitability of the packing station's operations would be so reduced that the small man would probably not get any bonus at the end of the trading year. These hard facts persuaded a majority of the members to vote for the differential rate of bonus.

Egg Scheme

OVER 300,000 voting forms have gone out to farmers who registered under the egg marketing scheme and they are voting this month to decide whether the scheme should go forward. Certainly no one can say that he has not heard about the scheme or had the opportunity to vote. Each of us has been subject to a good deal of propaganda, both for and against the scheme. The N.F.U., which fathers the scheme, probably has the advantage here because of its county organisation, which is in regular touch with farmers. Few may go to local N.F.U. meetings, especially in the busy time of spring when corn drilling can go on into the evenings, but most are on the N.F.U. mailing list and they have been left in no doubt about how they should vote.

Milk Worries

DAIRY farmers are anxious about the future of their business. They have had to take much reduced prices from the Milk Marketing Board this winter because of the extra milk produced far beyond the requirements of the liquid market, which alone gives a profitable return. The cause is partly seasonal. We do not often have a winter when the grass keeps green all through and the cows can feed on succulent kale until March. The extra milk has been produced cheaply but not of course as cheaply as summer milk. The Government and the Milk Board tell farmers that if they must produce more milk they should do it off cheap summer grass, when costs are low and the difference between costs and realisation value for making cheese is not so great as in winter. The individual is not likely to take much notice of this advice unless the price paid to him is fixed at a less attractive price in winter than in summer. I expect we shall see this in the coming year.

Shepherds' Crooks

THERE is such a demand in this country and all over the world for shepherds' crooks and walking sticks made in Scotland that the craft is now to have its own organisation. A Scottish Association of Crook and Stick Makers is being formed to foster the craft and arrange novice classes for crook-makers at the agricultural shows. There is already a good deal of enthusiasm, and at the Newcastleton Show there were no fewer than 80 entries in the crook-making competition. The secretary of the new association is Mr. Allister Campbell, The Rest, Tarbert, Argyll.

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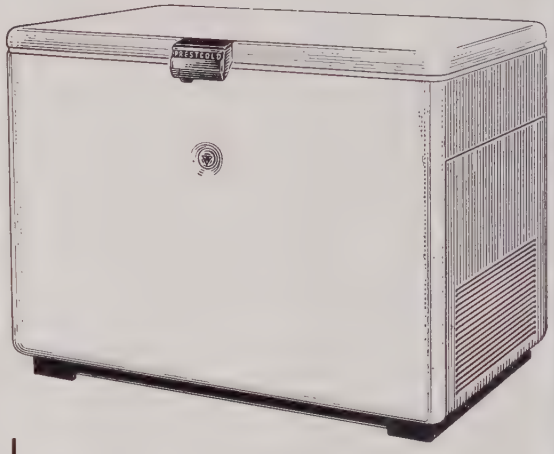

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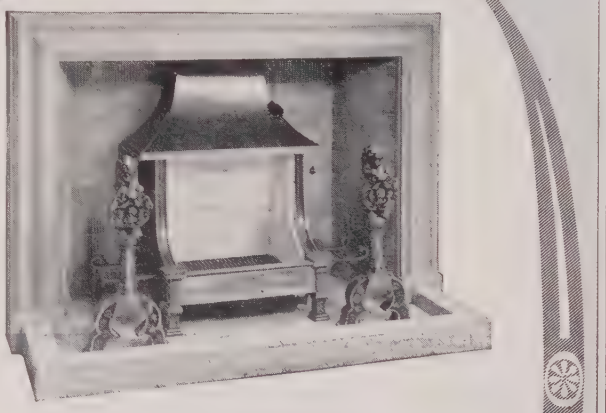

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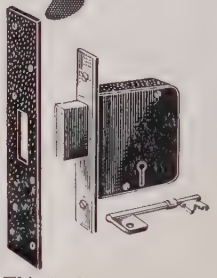

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ESTATE MARKET

RISING RATES AGAIN

DURING the past month national and provincial newspapers have reported that many householders will have to meet increased rate demands for the coming financial year. It is a familiar story, for rates have been rising steadily since the end of the war until to-day in some places they are more than 50 per cent. higher than in 1945, and are causing genuine hardship to retired people and others living on small fixed incomes. In fact, so far as I have been able to trace, only one council, that of the West Riding, propose a reduction, and there the sum mentioned is only 5d.; elsewhere rises of from 1s. 6d. to 3s. are common, and in one or two instances, notably at Birmingham and Manchester, increases of 4s. have been called for.

DEARER SOCIAL SERVICES

IT is clear from the vigorous opposition that councils have had to face that there is a widespread feeling that rates should not be allowed to go any higher. But in reply to suggestions that their methods of finance are unsound, authorities are emphatic that the bulk of their expenditure is conditioned by demands made on them by the central Government, in particular the need to provide money for the continual expansion of the social services, and that these demands, when taken in conjunction with the reduction in the assessments of commercial premises, have made a mockery of their budgets. For example, the finance committee of the London County Council, when recommending an increase of 2s. 4d.—the largest since the war—stated that this increase was partly due to the Government's decision to knock 20 per cent. off the assessments of shops and offices, and partly to the increased cost, after deducting Government grants, of running county services, notably education and housing. In Birmingham, representatives of the Corporation, when commenting on the proposed increase of 4s., stated that 2s. 5d. was accounted for by the reduction in the rateable value of shops and offices, and that the remaining 1s. 7d. represented a rise in expenditure of nearly £1 million, the greater part of which arose from national awards for wages and salaries.

INCREASE OF GENERAL GRANTS

IN view of the statements made by county and borough councils, it would seem that one of two things will have to happen if rates are to be reduced in the near future, assuming, that is, that the possibility of the Government's re-assessing shops and offices is discounted. Either wages, which have been increasing steadily over the years and which have added greatly to the cost of the normal services provided by local authorities, will have to be controlled, or else there will have to be cuts in the additional services ordered by the Government. But wages are harnessed to the cost of living, which shows no sign of becoming stabilised; and no one wants to see the social services cut, though most people feel that a little judicious pruning could be indulged in without damaging their structure. It is here that local authorities will have a chance of showing their mettle, for whereas up till now the Government, who provide them with the bulk of their income, have doled out approximately 85 per cent. of the money in the form of grants labelled for specific purposes, they propose, in future, to reduce the money distributed in this way to about 40 per cent. and to make good the difference by an increase in the general grants which councils can spend mostly as they like.

A substantial increase in the general grants allotted by the Government will not only allow authorities to cut out a considerable amount of waste, but it will also give them a chance of budgeting for several years in advance. Nevertheless, there is one thing that councils will have to take into account, and that is that no sooner is there any indication that they are being successful in their efforts to curb expenditure than they will be inundated with requests to provide money for a wide assortment of projects. If rates are to be reduced many of these requests will have to be resisted.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS' LONDON SALES

IN 1955 the Church Commissioners, who are one of the largest landowners in the country, sold part of their Paddington estate in London for more than £1 million, and the other day came the news that they have disposed of another block of property in the same district to an investment company. This last sale, the largest single block that the Commissioners have ever sold, includes Westbourne-terrace, most of Gloucester-terrace, Cleveland-square, Cleveland-gardens and numerous other properties in the W.2 postal district, and in this instance also the purchase price was reported as having been in the neighbourhood of £1 million.

The sale of London property by the Commissioners is part of a policy that was initiated a few years ago and that has involved the transfer of large sums of money from gilt-edged securities and urban properties to industrial equities and agricultural land, and I recall that as recently as August of last year I mentioned that they had acquired Holm Hill, an estate of 3,033 acres in Cumberland, Longden Manor, a property of 1,516 acres near Shrewsbury, and two farms totalling 575 acres near Selsey, Sussex.

BORDER SALES

SINCE, last week, I referred to the offer, by the Earl of Home and the Douglas and Angus Estates Company, of North Wark, a stretch of salmon fishing on the River Tweed forming part of the Hirsel estate, Coldstream, Berwickshire, I have heard that the same owners have instructed Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley to sell the Bonkyl estate, an agricultural investment of about 3,700 acres situated three miles from Duns, Berwickshire. The land, which yields a gross income of £3,826 a year, consists of four farms ranging from 565 acres to 976 acres, 600 acres of woodland, in hand, and close on 50 cottages. Burdens on the estate amount to only £329.

An agricultural investment in Northumberland that changed hands the other day was Sholton Kirknewton, a farm of about 840 acres that lies on the east bank of the River Bowmont, close to the Scottish border. Here the land is arable and leys, with permanent pasture, with the exception of 22 acres of woodland and 197 acres of hill land. The sale was negotiated by Messrs. Strutt and Parker, Lofts and Warner and Messrs. Clark and Sons.

Lancashire is a long way from Westminster, and that could well be the reason why Mr. Fitzroy Maclean, M.P., has decided to sell Beechfield, a Georgian house that stands in 20 acres at Yealand Conyers, near Carnforth. The property, which is offered privately through Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley, looks across the valley of the River Lune and includes a cottage, garages, a paddock and several fields.

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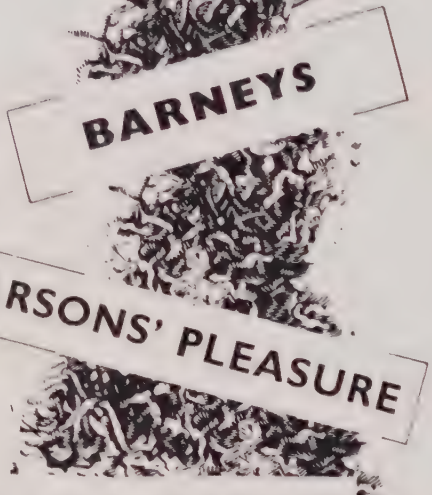

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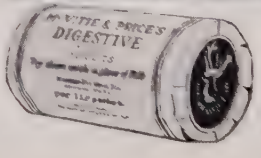

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NEW BOOKS

THE CORRUPTION OF BYZANTIUM

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

IT was in the 4th century A.D. that Constantine chose Byzantium as the capital of the Roman world and called it Constantinople. It was in 1453 that the Saracens stormed into the city. Mr. René Guerdan, in *Byzantium: its Triumphs and Tragedy*, translated by D. L. B. Hartley (Allen and Unwin, 25s.), tells us that when the leader of the conquerors looked upon the famous city, desecrated, ransacked and pillaged, "tears came into his eyes and, sobbing, he expressed his sadness. 'What a town this was, and we have allowed it to be destroyed!' " Whether this be fact or legend, it casts light on the self-deceiving ways of men. "We have allowed it to be destroyed" is an equivocation for "We have destroyed it." However, it is a remark to be well pondered to-day, lest some starving and degenerate remnant of mankind find itself sobbing "What a world this was, and we have destroyed it." *Absit omen.*

In his last paragraph M. Guerdan speculates upon the chances of that pregnant moment. A Christian fleet, bearing reinforcements, had been off Chios for a month, becalmed. One day's wind could have brought it into action. "Then would the Turks have raised the siege and hastily withdrawn. One windy day—on such things hang the fate of empires and the course of history."

ROTTEN WITH LUXURY

I don't believe it. The fate of an empire is determined by the character of its citizens. If not then, at any rate soon, Byzantium would have fallen by its own corruption. It was rotten with luxury. Theoretically, it was the Kingdom of Christ on earth. Its laws were promulgated in the name of "The Lord Jesus Christ, our Master." "The people of Byzantium strove to promote, among others as well as among themselves, the notion—so flattering to themselves—that the ruler of Byzantium was Christ himself. . . . The Byzantine Empire was, in effect, nothing but the great scene of a spectacular drama, a mystery or a passion play, in which the consecrated dynast as the leading character played through the centuries the part of Christ." He played it in a way that would have caused Jesus to raise his eyebrows. He played it as an autocrat with power of life and death over everybody. He played it in circumstances of never-ending pomp. Many times a day he changed into more and more gorgeous garments; his life was encrusted with jewels and precious metals, as befitted God on earth.

And who were they, those God Emperors? Those who were strong enough and cunning enough to seize supreme power. There was no dynasty, no continuity. One could violently cease to be God like this. During the games in the hippodrome it was the custom for the crowd and the Emperor to eat at half-time. The Emperor Phocas dallied over his meal and the impatient plebs started shouting to him to get on with it. Annoyed, "the tyrant then let loose his guard; heads, noses and ears were cut off, and there was great slaughter. A few years later the same crowd had the satisfaction of seeing Phocas roasted alive in the bronze bull on the order of his successor, Heraclius."

A butcher, a swineherd, an odd job man, a naval petty-officer and others equally lowly took over the onerous business of being Emperor and God in one. Power was maintained by brutal torture preceding execution. "Such terrible executions," M. Guerdan says, "sprang from the logic of the system: the greater the divinity of the institutions, one might say, the less human the punishments." What the "logic" of this is I don't understand.

SOVEREIGNS ASSASSINATED

To attain unlimited power sanctified by divinity must have been a tempting goal to the ambitious, but the prudent, considering the history of the office, may well have considered that the pickings of a mere human being were more likely to be durable. "Of 109 sovereigns, 65 were assassinated, 12 died in convent or prison, 3 died of hunger, 18 were castrated or had their eyes put out, their noses or hands cut off, and the rest were poisoned, suffocated, strangled, stabbed, thrown from the top of a column or ignominiously hunted down. In 1,058 years there were 65 revolutions of palace, street or barracks and 65 dethronements. So it would be true to say of Byzantium, too, that it was an absolute monarchy tempered by assassination."

An ambassador wrote this of what he found in Constantinople: "As he advanced on a monster of a horse, the psalmists cried with base flattery, 'Here is the Morning Star! The source of light rises! His look reflects the sun's rays! May the Autocrator Nicephorus live long! Render homage!' How much more appropriate if they had chanted: 'Here is the old man, the old fool, shuffling about like an old woman, as ugly as a satyr! Oh, you lout, oh, you clumsy one! Hairy old barbarian, broken-winded old oaf! The

BYZANTIUM: ITS TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDY. ***By Rene Guerdan, translated by D. L. B. Hartley***
(Allen and Unwin, 25s.)

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: AN INTRODUCTION. ***By Jacques Feschotte, translated by John Russell***
(Collins, Comet Books, 2s. 6d.)

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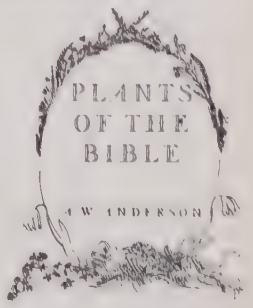

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REVIEWS by HOWARD SPRING—continued

insolent, the shaggy one! You coarse old Cappadocian!'." Well, there are two points of view about Byzantium's God on earth. Read the book and take your choice. Or perhaps you will think of it, as I do, as a bloody-minded tyranny like many others, as a city whose artists were distressingly over-elaborate, and whose philosophers and theologians were industrious theorists destined not to see their notions affecting the thought and conduct of those among whom they lived.

REVERENCE FOR LIFE

Never was there less of a theorist than Albert Schweitzer. The guiding thought of his life is simplicity itself, and his time has been spent in living the thought. "Reverence-for-life and abounding love-in-action." In so far as his inspiration can be put into words, there it is. And the essence of it is in the word "action." Knowing things is not enough. "Blessed are ye if, knowing these things, ye do them."

A brief account of Schweitzer's life is given in *Albert Schweitzer: an Introduction* (Collins, Comet Books, 2s. 6d.). It is by J. Feschotte, and is translated from the French by John Russell. I imagine that if one had known Schweitzer personally over many years, as M. Feschotte has done, it would be difficult to fall short of idolatry. M. Feschotte has not done so, and this may jar a little on those who come fresh to the subject. But it is right and proper that a popular account should be given of one of the most remarkable men of our time. The remarkable thing is that in a Christian world he is unobtrusively leading a Christian life, which is to say a life of simplicity, of giving and of giving up.

An authority on Bach and on organs and all organ-music, himself a musician of repute, a pastor, a lecturer known throughout Europe and America, a writer on many musical, religious and philosophical subjects and a doctor of medicine, he has put into a secondary place all that this could have meant to him and devoted the greater part of his life to founding and expanding a hospital in tropical West Africa. The first World War destroyed the work, but he built it up again. In the second, though the war raged round him, both sides respected the hospital.

The last words of the book are Schweitzer's own. "It is our spiritual destiny to be other than the world. By conforming to it, we live our existence instead of merely submitting to it. Through reverence for life we come to worship God in a way that is simple, profound and alive."

LIFE UNDER ELIZABETH I

In *The Elizabethans* (Cambridge University Press, 25s.), Prof. Allardyce Nicoll has done for his subject what Miss Christina Hole did for witchcraft in her book reviewed here last week. That is to say, he has allowed the contemporaries of his theme to speak for themselves. There are seventeen sections. He writes a brief introduction to each, and then, by the use of word and picture, lets the Elizabethans tell their own tale. Thus you may learn what they thought of their Queen, how they dressed and ate, how they built their houses and tilled their land, what amusements they had in town and country and what the roads and inns were like as they travelled from one to another. We see something of the Queen's court and the processes of government and justice, discuss the horrors of that constant enemy, the plague, and sit with young Elizabethans at school or in the university; finally, guided by Hakluyt, we go out with the great irruption of Elizabethan seamen as they "enter into alliance, amity and traffic with the Princes of the Moluccas and the Isle of Java, double the Cape of Bona Speranza, arrive at the isle of Santa Helena, and, last of all, return home most richly laden with the commodities of China." The book itself is as richly laden as one of those galleons, a scholar's condensation of enormous resources.

LOVE AFFAIR IN ITALY

It seems ungracious in these days, when so few books are *written*, to complain of writing that is too good to be true. But the complaint cannot be withheld from Mr. Charles Morgan's *Challenge to Venus* (Macmillan, 15s.). When Martin, the hero, first sees the young Italian widow Fiammetta appear on the balcony, we know that this is a significant moment for them both, and our minds are open to receive the impression of Fiammetta. And what do we get? Her hair "was of a deep burning gold, brilliant here and there with the high-light gleam of helmets in an autumnal wood; and where it sprang loose upon her brow and in the narrow diadem of light which encircled her uplifted head, it had the spinning quality of that impetuous spray which runs along a wave-crest beneath an Aegean moon." That could be Walter Pater writing about what he thought he saw in a woman painted on canvas. It cannot be what a rather commonplace young Englishman in fact saw when he looked at a girl standing on a balcony.

Martin, a middle-class Englishman on his way to a job in the Middle East, breaks the journey to visit his old Oxford tutor who lives at Varenna. So he meets Fiammetta, a girl belonging to a family of great antiquity but decayed fortune. A love affair blew up and came to a satisfactory fruition; but could it go on, as Martin wished, to marriage; or must it be "a bracketed experience without obligation or consequence," as she understood it?

The argument and the action are around that question, and there is as much argument as action. And most of the argument leaves me stone-cold. When Fiammetta goes to talk things over with Sullivan, the tutor, he says: "You didn't propitiate the gods. You behaved as if you had nothing to fear from them—as if you were their equal. You didn't propitiate them even by folly. So you had to be wrecked. You had to be ambushed. You had to be brought down. You had to work out your legend."

I don't believe that even a dreary old Oxford tutor would be quite so dreary as to talk like that to a young, beautiful, distressed girl.

IN PRAISE OF CHEESE

THREE well-known English cheeses and three less known are praised in Ambrose Heath's little book, *English Cheeses of the North* (Harrap, 6s.). Cheshire, Stilton and Wensleydale each get several pages of discussion and ancedote, with coloured plates of them in appropriate gastronomic settings; Leicester, Lancashire and Derbyshire cheeses are briefly dealt with. Mr. Heath compares cheeses to wines: each has its own flavour derived from its native soil, and each has a different appeal to the eater. There are appendices on the right wines to drink with the cheeses, and how to store and serve them.

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Construction of a DAY DRESS

FABRICS woven to create the pliant silhouette that is this season's favourite were on display at the Nylon Fair and are ready to come into the shops either by the yard or made up by the manufacturers. Chiffon, as the queen of light soft textures, has come into its own once more, and a nylon chiffon from the West Cumberland Silk Mills appeared at the dress display as a bamboo-coloured short evening dress by Jean Dresses that had a bubble skirt which was blown out each side from a tiny waist and curved into a tight hemline. Lanvin-Castillo showed it in a warmer deeper tone with a high transparent neckline on a dinner dress that had a folded skirt. The fluid texture of another English chiffon, also composed of nylon by Ferguson, was apparent in the elegant design of Pierre Balmain, while a flame Courtaulds chiffon possessed the requisite lightness for a floating skirt. These nylons have been processed so that they possess a soft handle and, of course, they do not crease.

Ascher's blend of nylon with wool proved effective for a suit by Hardy Amies that had a short loose jacket, and a nylon and wool romaine was beautifully worked by Ronald Paterson for a dinner dress with a skirt in many layers. A pretty young dress of Horrockses in a printed nylon organza was crisper and had a bouffant skirt, the pattern in tones of pink being picked up by a geranium pink velvet cardigan—a twosome that would be excellent for a cruise or a spring holiday in the south.

Another new series is knitted and intended for sports. Made up as a sheath dress it looks smart in elaborate fancy ribbed

Dress and jacket in navy and white speckled tweed. The jacket is cut away at the throat to show the gathered chiffon yoke of the dress (Ronald Paterson). Turnback white felt by Rudolph

Mushroom and white Ascot ensemble in organza. The dress is high-waisted and the coat floats out from under a wide collar that falls in fluting folds (Digby Morton). White pedal straw bound with mushroom velvet (Paulette)

patterns and the dresses can be easily washed and dried and keep their shape. A nylon grosgrain has a pleasantly matt surface and is ideal for summer coats. Taffetas and velvets have been silicone-proofed so that they repel water; heavy brocades gorgeously woven with silver or gold achieve a puckered surface by the various tensions of the yarns. A jersey with a suède surface designed by Courtaulds drapes like a silk georgette and falls in limp classical folds; an Ascher mixture of wool and nylon with a brushed hairy surface should be most effective for a big skirt or a summer coat. Nylon tweeds are knitted to make the canvas surfaces that have been a highlight of the recent couturier shows.

The two leading silhouettes, the floating skirt and the narrow draped sheath, require completely different textures. Supple chiffon and crisp taffetas, both very light, peau de soie and satins with a gentle polished lustre and limp rayon crêpes were among the British fabrics included in the display held for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret by the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers. The nylon chiffon of Courtaulds appeared for a short printed dress by Mattli. Digby Morton chose pearl grey Cumberland satin for a *robe de style*, Hardy Amies a pale blue satin for a dress covered by a turquoise satin coat; both were full and spreading in the picture tradition. A narrow dinner dress designed by John Cavanagh from limp white rayon crêpe has a raspberry pink taffeta sash slipped through slots below the waist and in the front and a short bolero. The melon-shaped skirt looked elegant and different as shown by Michael in a black British wool that is as supple as pure silk crêpe de Chine, and the dress was ankle-length. Hartnell's picturesque short white organza was covered with pale-coloured organza flowers and had a Dresden china delicacy. A formal ivory satin by Worth was unadorned save by a trail of light gold embroidery that began as a single shoulder strap and continued down one side nearly to the hemline of the skirt. Certainly evening styles are varied enough for every figure.

Silk coats over light dresses seem the thing for this year's Ascot. For

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(*Left*) **Rough-surfaced wild silk in the natural colour makes a sheath dress. It has a matching and loose three-quarter coat that ties at the back with a drawstring (Michael). Slashed straw toque by Agmar**

The coral-coloured wool coat on the right falls from narrow shoulders. A built-in band below the waist holds the folds under the arms (Ronald Paterson). Swathed turban of tulle by Rudolph

(*Below*) **A sheath of printed silk, grey on white, is cut with a shirt top. A narrow folded apron ties on, making a panel in front (Michael)**

Photographs by COUNTRY LIFE *Studio*

his show Victor Stiebel made a flowered ensemble using the same print in organza and shantung with the full light skirt of the dress in organza and the rest in the firmer silk. John Cavanagh's celadon green taffeta dress was covered by a warm light coat of ivory wool lined with the taffeta and looked easy and gay for an unpromising day. Worth's deep blue satin coat gathered at the back into a curved yoke covers a dress of chiffon; a lovely scheme by Mattli combines sweet-pea pinks and mauves—a caped coat of mauve hopsack lined with pale pink taffeta and a dress in the same pink and mauve. Coats and dresses are gored so that they float out at the hemlines, shoulders being kept narrow. Coats take collars that fold well back from the throat; the décolletages of the dresses are low, as they are intended for wear for dinner and dancing as well as for a formal afternoon occasion.

A NEW construction for day dresses is one factor that has radically altered the look of the clothes. The narrow dresses are generally made from supple woollens, chiffons and fine soft silks that are laid on a soft foundation, and the moulded silhouette, often with a bloused back, though it looks basically simple, conceals an intricate cut. This is especially true of the portions round the armholes, where an elaborate system of seaming is used, and the bodice of the dress may be cut in one with the top portion of the sleeve, and the dress be darted about the waist. The grain is worked so that the material gives and constricts, and seams frequently slant diagonally across the figure. Skirts are cut in layers or pleated into the waist with short unpressed pleats so that they present a little curve above the narrow skirt line. Necklines are often quite low and collarless, as the dresses are usually shown under a jacket or coat. The shirt dress shown everywhere adopts a modified form of this subtle cut above the waist-line, keeps the narrow shoulder and often has a pleated skirt. The chiffon shirt dress is a great success for the spring with a softly pleated wide skirt and fancy buttons down the front of the shirt top, which is simply tailored. In cotton the shirtwaist dresses with the three-quarter or long sleeves look covered up after the many décolleté and sleeveless dresses of last year.

Yokes play a definite and important rôle in all the dress styling. Cocktail and Ascot dresses of printed crêpe or silk jersey, taffeta, shantung, lace or linen often have their low necklines filled in up to the throat by a transparent chiffon or tulle yoke. Even tweed dresses have chiffon yokes; so do linens, or the whole back may be in chiffon of the same shade. Street dresses in smooth cloth may have a low curving yoke of the wool across the shoulders at the back with the backs box-pleated into it and then they pouch over at the waistline. On straight jackets this same pleating is inserted or the backs are gathered into a shallower oval-shaped yoke. Many of the satin and taffeta coats for summer functions show the same yoke line at the back, so that they flow out from the shoulders. The stiffer rough-surfaced silks that look much like straw, usually straw-coloured, make coats that hang stiffly from the shoulders and so appear considerably bulkier. They are modelled on a sports coat and look very chic over the most sophisticated of draped chiffon, or jersey dresses or a sheath of the same silk.

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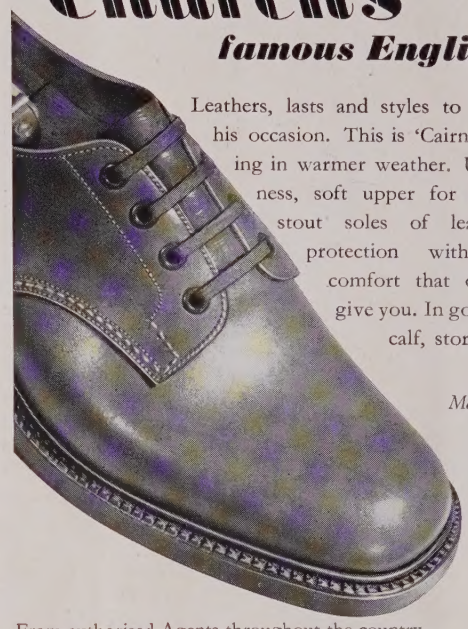

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